

# MALTA

THE ISLANDS AND THEIR HISTORY

BY

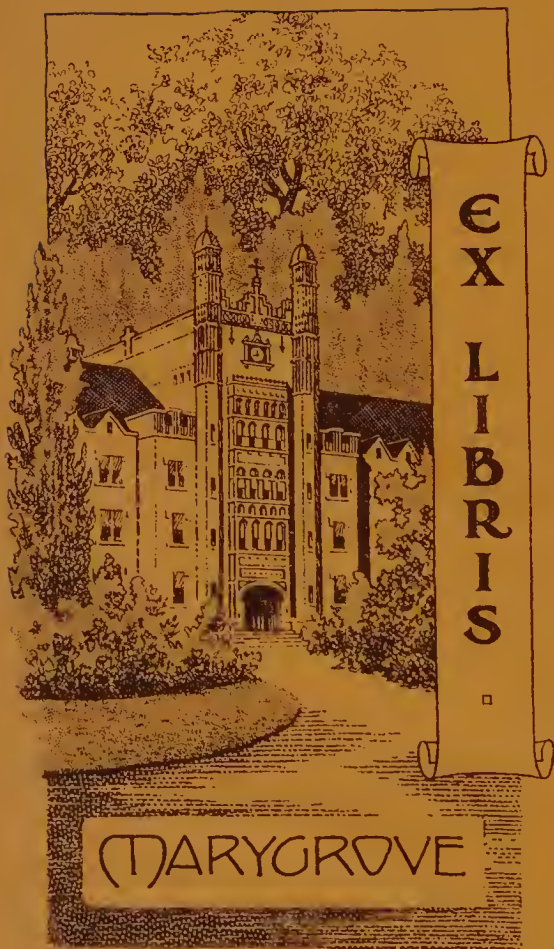
T. ZAMMIT



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# MALTA

## The Islands and their History

by

Themistocles Zammit

O.M.G., M.D., Hon. D. Litt. (Oxon).

late Rector of the University of Malta

Director of the Museum

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SECOND EDITION  
REVISED AND ILLUSTRATED.

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# PREFACE

## TO THE SECOND EDITION.

The rapid sale of "the History of Malta" has encouraged the Author to prepare a second edition, revised, enlarged, and illustrated. The Chapter on Local Pre-history has been brought up to date, the latest discoveries being duly noted. In view of the smallness of the work and its self-imposed limitations, other additions were not deemed advisable. Extensive information concerning the more important events that are here summarily dealt with, may easily be obtained from the works referred to in the Bibliography at the end of the Book.

The aim of this little work is simply to give a comprehensive, though short, account of the Maltese Islands. The reader will find a simple sketch of the physical formation of the Islands, a brief reference to their earliest inhabitants — as illustrated by the extensive pre-historic monuments — and an account of the share the Maltese people have had in the historical pageant of the Mediterranean Sea. The account purposely stops at the year 1885, for of contemporary history no compendium is possible without entering into controversial matters which the Author is not prepared to approach.

To all those who, directly or indirectly, by suggestions or criticism, have contributed to this work, very sincere thanks are offered. Capt. James Robinson of the Smith's Doc Journal, who kindly allowed the use of the clichè showing St. Paul's Fountain, and Lt. Commander Drummond R. N. who contributed the interesting photo of the cart-ruts beyond Boschetto, are especially deserving of the Author's gratitude.

T. Z.

## PREFACE

TO THE FIRST EDITION (1926)

The History of a small country like Malta must necessarily be anecdotal. Though many of the events that happened in the Islands have in no small way affected the history of Europe, the ordinary circumstances of local life can hardly reach beyond their territorial waters. Storms were, and are, often raised in the Maltese tea-cup.

To those who know Malta only from an Atlas, local events and disputes may prove of slight interest, but to the Maltese people, and to those whom force of circumstances has led to live on its shores, the Island has a history with a meaning and a charm of its own. To them, the present is often a reflection of the past, and the busy harbours, the grim bastions, the crowded villages and the rugged, silent ravines, are but the background of historical persons and memorable events linked in many ways with their daily life.

In writing a concise account of Malta and its history it was never the aim of the Author to do more than bring together, in the simplest possible form, information which is to be found scattered through many volumes written in various languages. This book may be useful to the advanced student of local history but it is primarily intended for those in the early stages of that study, and for such readers as wish to acquire a general knowledge of these Islands and their inhabitants.

To several friends who kindly helped me with advice and supplied me with information I wish to express my deep gratitude but my best thanks must go to Miss Dorothy Garrod of Oxford, who volunteered to read the manuscript before it was sent to the publisher.

T. Z.

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THE MALTESE ISLANDS  
AND THEIR HISTORY.



## CHAPTER I.

### **The Maltese Islands.**

#### GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION.

Malta is the largest of a group of islands situated in the Mediterranean in latitude  $35^{\circ}, 53', 50''$  N and longitude  $14^{\circ}, 31', 7''$  E of Greenwich. The Group consists of Malta, Gozo (Ghaudex, in vernacular) Comino (Kemmuna), Cominotto (Kemmunett) and Filfolà (Filfla), and lies about sixty miles to the South of Sicily and one hundred and eighty miles to the north of Africa.

Malta is about seventeen miles long and nine miles broad, with an area of ninety-five square miles. With its long axis running south-east and north-west, it has the appearance of a flat fish with its deep mouth to the south-east and a wide tail to the north-west. Gozo, to the north-west of Malta, is about nine miles long and four and a half miles wide, with an area of about twenty-six square miles; Comino, lying between the two

larger islands, is about one and a half miles by one mile and a quarter; Cominotto, is an islet separated from Comino by a narrow channel; Filfola is a rock about three miles off the southern coast of Malta.

Both Malta and Gozo have an undulating surface of low hills and tortuous valleys. In Gozo the hills are more detached than those in Malta and some of them, rising sharply to a point, give a quaint appearance to the landscape. The highest hilltop in Malta, 826 feet above the sea level, is in the south-west of the islands. At their south-western coasts, both Islands end in abrupt cliffs which at some points rise sheer from the sea to a height of about 400 feet. The high table-land on the south-west slopes gently to the north-east where the coast is low and indented with bays, creeks, and harbours. The action of rain water and other atmospheric agencies have denuded most of the upper strata thus forming valleys, ravines, caves, etc.

### GEOLOGY.

Geologically, the islands belong to that class of land formed on the sea floor by the deposition of river detritus and remains

of marine organisms. The rocks belong to the Tertiary epoch and consist of a number of layers teeming with fossilised remains of vegetable and animal life which throve in the great sea when the tops of the Alps and the Apennines emerged from it as modest islands.

The main strata were described by Sir John Murray and Dr. F. A. Bather of the British Museum who made the following comparison with the Tertiary deposits of other Countries:—

I.	1. UPPER CORALLINE			
	a) white b) reddish yellow, c) soft white			
		Tortonian		Upper Miocene.
II.	2. GREENSAND.			
	a) yellow sand. b) Black sand			
	3. BLUE CLAY	Helvetian		Middle Miocene.
III.	4. GLOBIGERINA			
	a) White rotten b) Hard grained			
		Burdigalian		Lower Miocene
	c) Semi-crystalline d) Yellowish soft	Aquitanian		
IV.	5. LOWER CORALLINE.			
	a) Scutella bed b) Hard compact			
		Tongrian		Oligocene

The *Upper Coralline Limestone* which is now the first layer of rocks met with in many places, both in Malta and Gozo, is composed of a semi-crystalline mass of coral, making a compact white or reddish rock sometimes granular and friable. This rock, called in the vernacular "Zonkor tal wich" or "Kawwi", makes a first class hard stone easily worked and polished. It once covered the whole surface of the Islands but in many districts it was completely disintegrated and washed away. This layer is now visible only in the west and north-west of Malta and on the top of most of the Gozo hills. The islets of Comino, Cominotto and Filfola are still covered with this layer, thus testifying to a considerable depression of these districts.

The *Greensand* is a soft layer of dark green or reddish sandstone with abundant organic remains amongst which are distinguishable those of sharks, dolphins, whales, etc. This layer is nowhere thicker than fifty feet, while in some places it is hardly visible and in others it is completely wanting.

The *Blue Clay* or *Marl* containing very few organic remains is met with below the Greensand, to a depth of 20 feet; the colour

of this layer varies from a dark blue to a brown yellow. Being impervious to water it plays an important part in the formation of natural Springs. The rain water absorbed by the Limestone is stopped by the impermeable clay, over which it collects to flow out as springs when it finds its way to the open. This clay is very plastic and is made use of by our potters whilst the yellow clay gives a red ware varying in shade according to the temperature at which it is baked.

The *Globigerina Limestone* layer owns its name to the minute shells, called *Globigerina*, of which it is mainly formed. It forms a thick layer of a soft yellowish stone varying in character according to the horizon at which it is cut. The most important variety, quarried in many parts of the Island, is the famous building stone, called in the vernacular "Franca", a soft, fine-grained stone famous for its solidity and for its adaptability for delicate carving. In this stratum thin layers of brown pebble-like nodules made up of phosphates and organic remains are sometimes met with. Shells and teeth of several species of sharks are abundant in the phosphatic nodule seams; some of the shark's teeth measure fully six inches in length.

The Globigerina Limestone rests on a thick layer of a hard crystalline rock very similar to that of which the uppermost layer is formed. This layer, the lowest so far known, is called *Lower Crystalline Limestone* (Zonkor ta taht) a very compact rock, useful for building purposes. At Gozo, a fine quality of reddish stone, quarried from this layer, takes a high polish and goes by the name of Gozo marble.

#### PALAEONTOLOGY.

Bones of extinct animals are fairly abundant in Malta, and many palaeontologists have made these islands their hunting-ground. Spratt, Busk, Parker, Falconer, Leith-Adams, Issel, Caruana, Cooke, Tagliaferro are names which must always be connected with the Palaeontology of Malta.

A cave containing bone deposits discovered at Melleha in 1840, was explored by Captain Spratt in 1857. A fissure in the "Ta Gandia" stone quarry, near Mkabba, was explored by Dr. A. Caruana in 1857 and by Dr. Leith-Adams in 1862; a cave at Wied-il-Hesri, to the East of Zebbug, was excavated by Captain Spratt. Dr. Leith-Adams, in the years 1864 to 1866, dis-



covered bones of extinct animals at Maghlak, to the west of Mnaidra, at Benghaisa and at Bidni to the south of Zabbar. Caruana again collected fossil bones in 1870 from the quarry "Tax-Xantin" near Mkabba; Prof. Issel in 1865 discovered a bone deposit in the Ghar Dalam cave near Birzebbugia, subsequently excavated by Cooke, Tagliaferro, Rizzo, and Despott. Tagliaferro and Rizzo collected bones from a fissure at Zebbug and from fissures at "Ta Xiolxa", to the south of Zeitun, at "Ta Seiba" to the south of Mkabba, at Cordin, to the south of the Grand Harbour, and at Bur-Mghez to the north of Mkabba. The present writer in 1906 found a bone deposit in the "Tal Bidni" district on the south-east of Zabbar. A complete list of the prehistoric animals identified in Malta is given in Appendix I.

The animals discovered include elephants, swans, and hippopotami, none of which could thrive far from a rich vegetation and a large expanse of fresh water. According to Prof. Edward Hull and others, the Mediterranean Sea was once a series of fresh water lakes connected with one another by channels, and with land passages from Europe to Africa at the Strait of Gibraltar, Sicily, Malta, and Egypt. Along these

causeways the early pachyderms and ruminants travelled southwards to North Africa when driven by the increasing glaciation of Europe. The remains of those animals that tarried on the Maltese bridge were, in the course of time, washed into fissures, caves and ravines where, fossilized by the action of soil and water, they have been discovered by us in a more or less perfect condition.

### CLIMATE.

The climate of Malta is temperate. Surrounded as it is by a vast extent of water, it is not subject to the sudden changes of temperature which occur on the Continent. In winter, the average temperature rarely falls below 50 degrees Fahrenheit.

Snow is practically unknown, and frosty weather is rare. Sunless days are an exception, and Malta, in the winter months, is as pleasant and healthy as any of the famous resorts on the shores of France and Italy.

In summer, the heat is trying only when the damp southern wind (Scirocco) prevails. The temperature does not usually exceed 85 degrees in day time, and at night-fall, a cool sea breeze usually sets in.

The rainy season occurs between Octo-

ber and April, but it rarely rains continuously for days or even for many hours. The average annual rainfall varies between 21 and 22 inches, sufficient to enable the growth of a series of crops, and to furnish the ever-increasing population with an adequate supply of good water.

Gales blowing from a north-eastern direction are frequent in winter. This wind is known as "Gregale" and corresponds to the "Euroclydon" which was the cause of St. Paul's Shipwreck. In summer, gales blowing from the north-west are known as *Maiistral*, corresponding to the *Maestrale* of the Italians and the Mistral of the French. This strong wind greatly mitigates the summer temperature.

#### AGRICULTURE.

Owing to the scantiness of trees and to the stone walls which hide the fields, when viewed from a distance, both Islands appear barren and rocky. On closer inspection, however, one is struck by the number of fields terraced on slopes, or concealed in deep ravines, and generally extending to every bit of ground upon which some soil can be spread.

The quality of the soil necessarily varies with the geological layer on which it lies and from which it has been formed. On the Coralline Limestone and on most of the Globigerina, the soil is of a deep red colour but in the marly districts it is dark-grey or even bluish. The red soil is loose and granular and can be worked with ease; while the marly soil is compact, heavy, and difficult to break. Different crops thrive better on one soil than on another, and the Maltese husbandman is an expert in using his fields to the best advantage. Some villages, in fact, are renowned for certain crops which are never grown in other districts, and many fruits only reach perfection when cultivated in particular regions.

The soil is nowhere very deep except in the low lying fields at the mouth of valleys, where it must have been washed down from high lands by the rain water and there lay deposited for centuries. The fields in these low-lying places are well watered as in the case of the Marsa, Fiddien, Pwales and Burmarrod, all sites famous for their fertility.

The soil is almost everywhere rich in lime and phosphates derived from the disintegration of fossil animal remains.

Soils which lie upon pervious layers cannot be utilised in the dry seasons unless copiously watered, but soil resting on a marly rock retains some moisture even in the driest months, and allows the growth of crops even in summer. Vines, cotton, tomatoes, and other summer crops are, therefore, raised without irrigation in many districts, a fact which excites wonder in those who have no knowledge of the geological formation of the Islands.

The methods of cultivation used in Malta are quite primitive, but so well adapted to the condition of the soil that they could hardly be improved. The agriculturist works his shallow fields with his hoe and a rough wooden plough tipped by a steel plough-share drawn by a cow, a mule or even a small donkey. The rotation of crops is well understood; stable manure, the only one generally used in the islands, is perfectly adapted to enrich the different soils.

Wheat is grown in abundance but rarely sent to the market, the husbandman preferring to keep his crop for his own use. The red variety of wheat grows well and yields excellent flour. About 14,000 acres of land are annually sown in December

yielding an average of twentyeight bushels per acre of wheat which is reaped in June.

Barley is sown abundantly but only a small quantity is allowed to grow to maturity, it being mainly cut as green fodder for horses and cattle.

Sulla, a kind of clover, is a rich fodder very extensively cultivated. In March and April, the fields covered with the crimson flowers of this crop, present a most beautiful appearance. Besides furnishing food for the cattle a considerable quantity of this fodder is exported.

The cultivation of potatoes is also extensive because of the high price they sometimes fetch when exported to England or to Germany. Potatoes grow well, especially in soft and irrigated lands, their yield varying from five to twelve tons per acre. Before 1808, potatoes were not cultivated in Malta, and cotton was then the staple crop. Even in the great days of Carthage and Rome, Maltese cotton fabrics were in great demand, but the introduction of potatoes and the over-production of cotton in Egypt reduced our cotton crops to their present poor condition.

Onions yield abundant crops and tomatoes are grown extensively and profitably.

Cumin and other aromatic seeds grow in our fields and are richer in essential oil than similar products of other countries. In the eighteenth century, Cumin seed was largely exported to Northern Europe but now, that North Africa is growing the plant on a large scale, the local commerce in this article has much decreased.

The absence of trees from the fields is a feature which strikes the newcomer. Visitors are always ready to suggest that trees should be planted in every field and that shrubberies and groves should replace the hideous stone walls. The practical husbandman, however, knows very well that the shallow soil of the Maltese fields is not adapted to the growth of trees, for they impoverish the soil around them, and absorb all traces of moisture. In valleys, and in well sheltered fields, trees are grown with great care with excellent result. Oranges, pomegranates, lemons, pears, apples, peaches, nectarines, loquats and other fruit-trees are grown abundantly in gardens well watered and protected from the wind. Malta has long been known abroad for its oranges which rival the famous products of Spain. The Egg orange and the Blood orange have a peculiar flavour and are greatly appreciated by connoisseurs.



Other varieties are also cultivated, such as the Sweet or Chinese orange, the Mandarin and the Bitter orange, the latter being mostly cultivated for its blossoms which are gathered and distilled for the preparation of orange-flower water and for the valuable Neroli oil. The peel of the Bitter orange is used for pharmaceutical purposes and for the preparation of marmalade.

The vine has always been popular with our agriculturists, chiefly for the production of table grapes. Lately, however, the cultivation of vines for the wine industry has greatly increased and special varieties are imported for the purpose. The porous rock, especially if fissured, favours the growth of vines which yield a good profit after the third year.

Other hardy trees such as the carob, the olive tree, and the fig tree are also planted in fissures or artificial trenches in the rocky ground. In this manner the roots take up the moisture they require from the deep layers of the rock without in any way interfering with the soil on the surface.

The carob tree is indigenous in Malta; it has long, sweet pods, which are known along the shores of the Mediterranean as "carob beans", "locust beans", or "St. John's bread", and they furnish excellent fodder for



horses and cattle. In winter, the carob is the only tree which breaks the monotony of the bare stone walls.

The olive tree was once extensively cultivated in these islands, as can be testified by the numerous oil presses discovered in the ruins of Roman farm-houses and by place-names such as Zebbug, Zeitun, Ghasri, Bidni, all related to the olive or the oil. This tree is very hardy and fruitful, especially when close to a convenient water supply. The fruit is now seldom pressed for oil, but is usually pickled for local consumption.

The fig is another hardy indigenous tree which grows well on rocky ground where its roots can penetrate a fissure or a cavity. Many varieties which give excellent fruit are grown. A small quantity of figs are dried by the farmers for consumption in the winter months, while the rest are eaten fresh, a very cheap food greatly appreciated by all.

### DOMESTIC ANIMALS.

The husbandman is always a lover of animals, and in Malta every tenant of a good sized field owns a mule, one or more

cows, a few sheep and a donkey, besides pigs and poultry.

The local cattle, large animals of a fawn colour, are extensively used for agricultural work. Cow's milk is not much in demand as goat's milk is generally preferred, but its use is increasing.

The Maltese goat is of the best variety in the world; it has a dainty head, a clean glossy coat, either white, red or black. The amount of milk yielded is rarely below nine pints a day, and at times much greater.

The number of goats in the islands is reckoned to be about 20,000.

Sheep are also numerous, but their milk does not find its way to the market as it is mostly turned into cheese. The most common form of cheese is a small cake, about three inches in diameter, which is sold either fresh or half dried. The latter is often pickled in brine and exported to the East. The fleece of our sheep is not very thick and the wool is rarely sold, as it is the custom of the farmers to turn it into homespun cloth for their own use.

The island was for a time famous for its breed of mules and donkeys, but nowadays, unfortunately, these animals are growing very scarce. The local donkey is some-

times as tall as a horse and is a hardy animal which often does the work of a mule. The mule is very graceful, strong and inured to fatigue.

### POPULATION.

The civil population of both islands, as enumerated in 1901 and in 1921, was 184,742 and 211,564, respectively. (\*)


The principal town, Valletta, with a population of 23,000 is built on a narrow promontory between two harbours. On the southern side of the Grand Harbour are the Three Cities, namely, Senglea, Vittoriosa, and Cospicua with a population of 8,000, 6,000 and 12,000, respectively. Floriana, a suburb of Valletta, has a population of about 6,000, and, beyond it, to the west, Hamrun extends for over a mile and its population of over 14,000 is rapidly increasing. On the northern side of Valletta, across the Marsamuscetto Harbour, the suburb of Sliema, which in the sixties was a quiet summer resort has grown into a town with over 14,000 inhabitants.

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(\*) See Appendix. II.

All the bays on the north-eastern and south-eastern coast are developing into populous villages, such as St. Paul's Bay, St. Julian's Bay, Calcara, Marsascala, Marsascirocco, Birzebbugia. New villages are also growing round original clusters of farmhouses at Mgiar, Benjemma, Hal Dragu, Mtarfa, Marsa, Misrah-il-Barrieri, Ta Mrabat, etc.

The normal growth of the population, at present, can be reckoned at about 1,000 a year; a heavy increase considering the small size of the Islands. This increase has only been in progress during the last hundred years, for during the rule of the Knights of St. John the population was well nigh stationary.



## CHAPTER II.

### **The inhabitants of the Maltese Islands.**

It is commonly held, by those ignorant of the subject, that the inhabitants of Malta and Gozo belong to no distinct race, but are an admixture of the different peoples who at one time or another ruled the two islands. The Maltese language is similarly taken to be a patchwork of European and African dialects borrowed from these same conquerors. This theory, often repeated, has come to be accepted by many, but it is considered untenable by competent students who find that a careful scrutiny of the ethnography and language of the Maltese reveals but a trace of foreign elements.

For a long time it was believed that the Phoenicians were the first to inhabit these Islands. Malta was certainly a dependency of Carthage when that city was at the height of its power, and historical evidence is confirmed by the Punic remains met with in the Island, but the presence of megalithic

buildings dating back to at least 3000 B. C., testifies to the existence of an earlier civilisation. With these Neolithic remains the Phoenicians had no direct connection, for their colonisation of the Western Mediterranean did not begin before the time of the 18th dynasty of Egypt at the earliest, and possibly not until the 15th century B. C.

To Phoenician and Carthaginian influence we usually ascribe the rock-cut tombs so numerous in the islands, but the changed burial customs does not necessarily imply the disappearance of the older inhabitants. Neither the Phoenicians nor the Carthaginians appear to have settled in great numbers in Malta for to them only the harbours were a necessity, and not fields of which they had any amount both in Sicily and in North Africa.

At the close of the second Punic War, in 242 B. C., Malta with Sicily, Sardinia and the other Mediterranean islands, fell to the victorious Romans whose rule over them extended for over one thousand years.

Livy mentions the conquest of Malta, but the other Latin historians give no account of it. With Sicily in their hands the Romans could have had no need of so small an island as a field for settlers, and it is

probable that the occupation was purely a military one. The monuments and inscriptions of this period give evidence of Roman institutions worked by Roman officials, but there is no sign of a colonisation or of a powerful Roman influence on the language or the race. The custom of burning the dead and of burying in pit tombs, spread under Phoenician influence, was kept up throughout the Roman occupation; Punic tomb furniture is often found alongside Roman objects. Moreover a special set of coins was struck for Malta bearing Phoenician symbols with Roman or Greek inscriptions.

Various writers bear witness to the non-Roman character of the islanders during this period. Diodorus of Sicily, writing more than two centuries after the Roman Conquest, describes Malta as peopled by Phoenicians, and St. Paul refers to the islanders as barbarians, a term applied by the Greeks to those unfamiliar with the Greek language. The term was also used on various occasions by Thucydides, Pausanias, Diodorus of Sicily and others in writing of the Punic inhabitants of Sicily and the other Mediterranean islands.

The fall of the Roman Empire might have brought the Visigoths as conquerors of Malta, but of this there is no documentary



proof, and the Saracens, who seized the islands in A. D. 870 and occupied it for two centuries, are the next recorded rulers.

The Saracens were careful and voluminous annalists, and while the history of their rule in Sicily is recorded in detail, no written account remains of their occupation of Malta. There is, moreover, in Malta scarcely a trace of Saracenic remains so common in Sicily, Spain and Africa. It would, therefore, appear that there was no proper Arab settlement in Malta, but that, like so many other small places conquered by the Saracens, the Island was simply garrisoned and burdened with a tax.

In 1090, Count Roger the Norman with a handful of men took Malta from the Saracens and subjected it to Sicily. The Sicilian domination lasted for over four hundred years, but remained unaffected by political changes in the Maltese Islands, when the Norman, Suabian, Angevin, Aragonese and Castilian ruled in turn. During this time, Malta was given Sicilian governors and laws, but there is no record of any extensive Sicilian immigration, and the persistence of the old Semitic names in the parish registers, instituted at this period, stands as further evidence that no great ethnographic changes had occurred.



The connection with Sicily was broken in 1530, when Charles V. ceded Malta to the Knights of St. John who held it until the end of the 18th century. For the first time the Island was ruled from within, but the ethnological change of the native population was not noticeable. The members of the Order were bound by a vow of celibacy, while the men-at-arms, servants, and merchants, who followed them were not numerous enough to effect any marked racial change.

Even at the present time, when easy communication favours emigration and inter-marriage, the foreign element in the population is restricted to the professional and commercial centres while the country people remain unaffected. The Sicilian, Spanish, Italian and Greek families, who for centuries after the Norman conquest owned property and lived in Malta, have either disappeared or were partly absorbed in the native population. The Maltese peasant is markedly exclusive, and this characteristic has helped to preserve the individuality of the primitive race through centuries of foreign rule.

Although race and language are two distinct things which may not have any connection with each other, still the study of

the Maltese language throws light on the people of Malta. There is no doubt that Maltese is a Semitic language, and not the patchwork of corrupt Italian and Arabic patois that it was commonly supposed to be. A number of Latin words have been necessarily introduced at various stages of civilisation, but the grammar of the language is Semitic and more especially allied to Arabic.

The Saracenic occupation of Malta might, at first sight, seem to furnish an obvious explanation of this fact, but it is only necessary to recall the centuries of Phoenician and Carthaginian domination to realise that Malta was subject to Semitic influences long before the Islamic conquest. During the Roman period the Maltese spoke the Punic language and the Maltese currency of the early Roman times is marked with Punic characters. St Paul, who called the islanders Barbarians, because they did not speak Greek or Latin, might well have owed his success in converting the Maltese to the fact that they spoke a Semitic tongue not unlike the Canaanite with which, as a native of Tarsus, he was doubtless familiar.

Although a Phoenician origin of the language seems thus to be indicated, there is ample evidence that the pre-Phoenician

language of the island was also Semitic in type, and that this primitive tongue forms the groundwork of Maltese as it is spoken to-day. Topographical names, for instance, are among the earliest words used by any people, and the least subject to change; in Malta, the majority of these names are Semitic and identical with those found in Palestine, Arabia, Egypt and north Africa as far as Morocco. (\*)

According to the most widely accepted theory, the Mediterranean basin at the opening of the Neolithic age was the scene of successive migrations from some part of Asia Minor or Africa. Arabia is regarded by many as the cradle of the Mediterranean Race, and, in the opinion of Professor Myres, it nurtured not only a type of man but a family of languages. This race, migrating in waves to new lands, formed tribes, so that the original language broke up into separate speech groups developing independently. Each tribe, isolated from the influence of the parent language, produced an idiom based on the same, but peculiar to the tribe. In this way we have languages differing among themselves as widely as Hebrew, Aramean,

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(\*) See Appendix III.

Maltese and Arabic, yet all springing from one common root.

The Semitic tongue of Malta has not, of course, retained its primitive simplicity. The vocabulary of any language is liable to change under the influence of other tongues and other conditions of life; once it is removed from its native soil and cut off from kindred dialects phonetic corruption is inevitable. The parish registers instituted in Malta during the Sicilian period bear witness both to the persistence of Semitic names and to their corruption by foreign notaries and clerks who were unable to render the native gutturals and aspirates. The names are registered in their old form, but the spelling is often latinised. (See Appendix III.)

Malta presents the peculiar feature of an island people that, talking a Semitic language, was cut off from the active influence of its parent tongue. The lack of a Semitic literature to nourish it left the primitive language, of the Maltese stunted and meagre. The syntax and the mechanism of the primitive language, ingrained in the mind of the people, was retained, but, as time went on, the vocabulary, distorted here and there for the want of a written literature, was constantly fed from foreign sources mostly through

mariners and merchants who had to tarry on the island. It was thus that Phœnician, Arabic, Sicilian, Genoese, Spanish and Portuguese words were added from time to time to the primitive Maltese language which devoid of direct Semitic feeders, still managed to remain Semitic. "Remove a language from its native soil", says Max Muller, "tear it away from the dialects which act as feeders, and you can arrest its natural growth. There will still be the progress of phonetic corruption, but no longer the restoring influence of dialectic regeneration". But the grammar resists all corruption and is always there to tell the tale, for though languages may get mixed in their vocabulary they can never be mixed in their grammar.

When all these facts are taken into consideration nobody is justified in calling the Maltese a mixed race and their language a medley of European and Semitic tongues.



## CHAPTER III.

### **Prehistory.**

#### PALAEOLITHIC AGE.

The earliest inhabitants of Malta must have dwelt in the caves which are so abundant in the face of the cliffs of the sea-coast and along the ravines.

In 1917, among abundant remains of the elephant, the hippo and other extinct animals, in the Ghar Dalam Cave, at Birzebbugia, a couple of human teeth, pertaining to a type of man (*Homo Neanderthalensis*), known to have lived at the beginning of the Mousterian cultural period (about 40,000 B.C.), were met with. This type of man disappeared at the end of the fourth Glacial Epoch.

Neither in Ghar Dalam Cave nor anywhere else in Malta distinct implements of the palæolithic ages have, so far, been discovered.

In 1917, a number of microlites, or pigmy flints, were found on the plateau to the

south-west of Casal Dingli, belonging to a type which is now attributed to the Old Stone Age of Europe, (Upper Palaeolithic, 12000 B. C. Osborne calls this period the Azilian-Tardenoisian.) <sup>(1)</sup> Although not absolutely typical, these flints are geometric in form, and might have been adapted for use as harpoons or fish hooks. Pigmy flints are met with along the southern Mediterranean, markedly in Tunis.

Another trace of what may be termed a palaeolithic custom was discovered in 1924 <sup>(2)</sup> when human remains buried in red ochre were found on the road to Bukana, to the west of Casal Attard in Malta and at Xaghra in Gozo. The custom of burying in red ochre was first observed among the late Neanderthal men and continued throughout the entire Upper Palaeolithic period from the Aurignacian burials of Grimaldi to the Azilian of Mas d'Azil. The pots-herds accompanying the Bakana remains cannot be ascribed to so remote a period, but the use of red ochre is interesting. Although

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(1) Osborne—Men of the Old Stone Age. p. 467.

(2) Curator's Annual Reports 1910-11 and 1924. The remains are now exhibited in the Valletta Museum.



these facts, taken together, do not amount to a proof of the existence of palæolithic man in these Islands, they nevertheless should not be lost sight of by archæological students.

### CAVE DWELLINGS AND CAVE BURIALS

Many interesting caves were discovered in these Islands with evident signs of human occupation in the early neolithic and in the later Bronze Age periods. Ghar Dalam and Bur-meghez, in Malta, and tal Maqghad, at Gozo, have yielded human bones and prehistoric pottery testifying to an advanced culture in the early stages of human life in these Islands.

### G HAR-DALAM

The cave of Ghar-Dalam, in which traces of palaeolithic man were found, opens on the eastern bank of the Ghar-Dalam ravine, not far from the shores of St. George's Bay at Birzebbugia. The cave is deep with undulating ceiling from which hang large stalactites. The floor is made of a red and bluish clayey deposit, over fourteen feet in thickness, with distinct stalagmitic layers at various depths. By cutting a number of



trenches in the floor, it was shown that the cave had been inhabited down to a recent period, for pottery and other objects characteristic of the Stone and Bronze Ages were found. Under the soil hardened with stalagmitic masses, the fossilized bones of extinct animals are deposited, some in their natural position, others rounded and smoothed like pebbles by the action of the water which rolled them about for ages. (1)

### BUR-MEGHEZ.

The cave of Bur-Meghez, discovered in 1911 by Professor N. Tagliaferro, in a stone quarry called *Tan-Nashari*, about half a mile to the north-east of the village of Mkabba, is sixty-two feet long, with an average width of six feet, mostly in an north-eastern direction. When cleared of the dark red earth which filled it up, the cave was found to contain the remains of at least thirty-nine human bodies laid along the walls and partly protected by stones.

Potsherds of the early neolithic type

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(1) See—Keith—Neanderthal man in Malta (Royal Anth. Inst.).

C. Despott—Excavations of Ghar-Dalam (ibid.)

and personal ornaments, such as small polished stone axes or celts, shell beads, and buttons of various shapes were found while bones of domestic animals and of a kind of deer in a semi-fossilized state were abundant.

### TAL PERGLA

The cave at *Pergla Iz-zgheira* or *tal Maqghad* in the Xaghra district at Gozo, discovered in 1913, yielded specimens of the best neolithic sherds known in these islands. The potsherds and the other objects found in this cave are now in the Valletta Museum.

### CART-TRACKS.

Some of the barren rock-surfaces in Malta are deeply marked by parallel grooves evidently worn out by the passage of heavy carts for thousands of years. On close inspection, the grooves are found to be V shaped, from 6 to 20 inches wide at the surface. The path-way between the ruts is usually 54 ins. wide. The depth of the ruts varies with the inclination of the ground, so that, when there is a marked side slope of the rock, one of the ruts is shallow whilst the

other is correspondingly deep. The axle of the old carts could not therefore be wider than 54 in. In most of our modern country carts, the axle is about 5 feet ; or practically of the same length as that of their predecessors.

These old cart-tracks, sometimes in single pairs, but more often in groups, are observed to run up the side of hills, that is from the bottom of valleys to the top of the numerous plateaux. There are cases where ten pairs of cart-ruts furrow the surface of the land, testifying to a brisk traffic at a certain period of the history of these Islands.


The question was repeatedly mooted as to whether these cart-tracks were originally cut for the wheeled traffic or were worn out by the latter. If one considers the difficulty of having the first few thousands carts to move always on the same path of hard rock, one is lead to believe that the first tracks were cut to determine the course of the carts; in time, of course, the tracks would wear out and deepen.

The probability that these old cart-ways were started by human labour is further enhanced by the fact that in many cases a system of shunting is arranged so that two carts coming from opposite directions

on the same track may continue their course. This very neat arrangement could not be the result of a mere accident, not only because there are many examples of this shunting, but because it is evident that both thought and labour are involved in elaborating this system.

So far, one understands that in Malta, at an early age, there was a system of cart traffic on wheels, that spreads from low-lying lands up to the flat hill-tops. This heavy traffic must have gone for a long number of years and the material handled must have been abundant, cheap, and of the greatest value to those who carted it. We may say at once that the precious material transported appears to have been field soil, accumulated for ages in the valleys. When the increasing population required as much land as possible under cultivation on which to grow food-stuffs, they could only do this by carrying earth from the valleys up on the sides and tops of hills where terraces were built and the soil spread.

The work was hard and long, but it was necessary and it was carried out in the face of all obstacles.

 This huge work of a large and peaceful people has never been adequately appreciated. One should keep in mind that every

foot of soil in the fields on the high ground of Benjemma, Tal Ghalia, Notabile, etc., was painfully carted up on the heavy prehistoric carts pushed and drawn, probably, by human hands, for no trace of animal traction has been, so far, discovered. No other people but those who raised our numerous megalithic buildings could have undertaken the magnificent task of covering the barren rocks with fertile soil. Fields are more important than megalithic buildings, and yet the visitor who admires the ruins of Hajar Kim, Tarxien and Gigantea give no thought to the daily life of those early people who whilst providing for themselves fields and farm-houses, did not fail to raise temples to the deities who helped them in their efforts and protected them against their enemies.

Looking at the Malta cart-tracks from every point of view, one is forced to admit that they are the index of activity of a Neolithic population who built huge temples to their Gods whilst they transformed a rocky, barren land into a fertile country, where agriculture was turned into a paying concern against numerous adverse circumstances.

## MEGALITHS.

As a sign of an early occupation of the Maltese Islands, numerous *menhirs*, *dolmens*, and *stone-circles* are still to be seen, relics of primitive worship and burial customs. These stone monuments are formed of large blocks of stone, conforming generally to the well known types of Western Asia, North Africa, and Western Europe, but often arranged in peculiar ways not observed elsewhere.

## MENHIRS.

A *menhir*, is a tall, rough pillar of stone with base fixed in the ground. Several of these standing stones are found both in Malta and Gozo. In Malta four good specimens can still be seen and the remains of several broken ones are known.

In a shallow field at Hal Far, a rocky district to the south of the Islands, the remains of an earlier civilization are everywhere visible. A fine *menhir* commonly known as "il hajra il wiekfa", stands as a flat pyramidal pillar of sandstone in fair preservation, nine and a half feet high, about two feet thick and over five feet wide. It is

firmly fixed in the ground, and is visible from a great distance.

On a hilltop, to the north of the "Hal Far" *menhir*, another monolith, commonly known as "Ta Ghammar", is still to be seen. At present it forms part of the boundary wall of a large field; it measures about seven feet above the surface of the soil, three feet at least of its base being buried. It is about one foot and a half thick and over four feet wide. The direction of the long axis of the base is south-east.

A third *menhir* stands close to the village of Kircop, on the main road leading to Zurrigo. Its name, *Is-Salib*, the Cross recalls the fact that a small cross was once placed on its top, probably to mark the limits of the parish. It rests on the solid rock, and forms part of the boundary wall of an adjoining field. It was, originally, of a rectangular shape, three feet wide, about two feet thick and over ten feet high, but its top was chipped away, to about one foot square, to fit the pedestal of a cross.

In a field at the Sebbieh district, known as "Liskorba," a roughly hewn protrude stone pillar stands by a mound from which the remains of a megalithic building. The place must have been an important megalithic



station; judging by the extent of the mound and by the number of megaliths and potsherds strewn in the neighbouring fields. The *menhir* is about two and a half feet thick, five feet wide and twelve feet high above the surface of the field.

Standing stones were probably more numerous in Gozo than in Malta; the remains of several are known there, though only one is left standing to the west of the village of Kala. This is a hard crystalline rock, pyramidal in form, with rough unfinished surfaces, eleven feet high, seven feet wide at the base, and about three feet thick.

Another monolith, known as "Il Gebleta Sansuna" is to be seen in a field called "Gnien Mrik" to the north-west of the village of "Kaccia" or "Xaghra." It is a huge block, from two to four feet thick, sixteen feet long, and as much wide, if a detached piece lying by its side is taken into account. This *menhir* is no longer standing, but lies on its side, supported at one end by a smaller block of stone.

### DOLMENS.

Until a few years ago, no *dolmens* were known to exist in Malta, but once the search



for them began, several were found, both in Malta and Gozo. A *dolmen* consists of a slab of stone supported, at a certain height, from the ground, by blocks or slabs so as to enclose a space or chamber. These structures may have been used as altars for public sacrifices or as monuments erected over a grave. In the latter case, they were probably covered by a mound of stones and earth.

In Malta, the first dolmens to be discovered were in the field "Ix-Xaghra ta fuk Wied Filep", adjoining the public road to the north of Mosta village, and to the south of the fort. There *dolmens* stood there at a short distance from one another, but one only is in good preservation. Professor N. Tagliaferro, their discoverer, found them completely rifled. The best of these *dolmens* has a slab of coralline stone, twelve feet long, five feet broad and two feet thick, supported, at five feet from the ground, by roughly hewn blocks.

Another fine *dolmen* discovered by Professor Tagliaferro in the district of Misrah Sinjura, between the villages of Krendi and Siggieui, measures, on top, thirteen by eleven feet, with an average thickness of two and a half feet. It was supported by large stones, now replaced by a rubble wall, at four feet from the ground. As in the former case, no

other archaeological material was found close to this monument.

In March 1914, a *dolmen* was found to the south of the menhir at Hal Far, where the rocky ground is strewn with the remains of megalithic structures. This *dolmen*, known as "Il Gebla Msakkfa", consists of a monolith of hard calcareous stone of a quadrangular shape, twelve feet long, about six feet wide and two feet thick. The surface is flat and roughly hewn, with a shallow, roughly quadrangular depression in the middle, surrounded by a deep groove and by several cup-like holes. It is supported by two courses of boulders, one at each end. At its eastern end, the space under the slab is two and a half feet high. The state of the underlying rock suggests that the slab was cut in place and afterwards raised about two feet above the ground.

On the 23rd. March 1915, a typical *dolmen* in a fair state of preservation, was discovered by Mr. Carmelo Rizzo and the present writer, on the rocky plateau of "Ix-Xaghra", in the Zabbar district. The slab of this dolmen is roughly quadrangular, measuring about six feet by nine, with an average thickness of six inches. The slab pierced in the middle by a round hole about three

inches in diameter, gave way at this point; the monument, however, is not otherwise disturbed.

A small but typical *dolmen* may be seen at San Giorgio of Birzebbugia, on the rocky plateau to the north-west of "Borg-in-Nadur". The thin but carefully cut slab, is supported by large blocks of hard stone. Adjoining this structure, is a row of large blocks, probably the remains of another dolmen of which the covering slab is missing.

A small dolmenic niche exists on the western slope of the deep ravine close to the "Hal-Farruj" road. Two large slabs cover an elongated space cut in the rock, the entrance being narrowed by means of stone blocks placed on each side. The niche is dug at such a height that several steps had to be cut in the rock in order to make it accessible. This ravine appears to have been an important place in prehistoric times, for numerous signs of human activity, such as hemispherical pits, artificial caves, deep trenches, and cup-like depressions, may be seen all round.

On the Northern coast of the Island close to *Kaliet Malcu*, in the "Ta Lihfar" road, an interesting dolmen is still standing. Its table stone is 67 in. long, 48 in. wide,

with a thickness of 14 in. It lays 37 in. above the ground supported by two blocks 35 in. high.

In Gozo, the rocky ground on the high plateau of "Ta Cenc," to the south of the island, is strewn with remains of primitive stone structures which have not yet been properly surveyed. The remains of several dolmenic niches are still to be seen among the numerous boulders.

### CROMLECHS.

A *cromlech* consists of several menhirs arranged to enclose a circular, elliptical or rectangular space. It is difficult to make some of our ruins answer to this definition, but large and small stone circles and enclosures are still standing both in Malta and in Gozo. On the "Ta Cenc" plateau, in Gozo, a number of these circles are found the most important of which is that known as "Il Borg ta li Mramma". At Ghain Sielem, close to the Rabat road, is a circle of huge boulders known as "Limreisbiet", described by the late Father E. Magri S. J., as the ruins of a chieftain's tomb. It is possible, however, that these circular or elliptical ruins may have been the

boundary walls of buildings which time has destroyed.

Mounds of earth and stones through which megaliths protrude are common, but the significance of these mounds can only be made known by a thorough excavation of the sites.

There are extensive but badly preserved ruins in the eastern part of Gozo near the village of Ghain Sielem. A long wall made of roughly hewn blocks and slabs, extends for over a hundred feet in the form of a wide curve. At a point where the wall bends at a sharp angle, two vertical slabs, each ten feet high and about seven feet wide, can still be seen. The internal arrangement of the building is not clear for the site has never been properly excavated.

### ROUND TOWERS.

Before proceeding to describe the great neolithic buildings for which Malta is famous, it would be well to mention certain ruins which, though not strictly prehistoric, undoubtedly belong to an age of which no written record survives. The potsherds collected near these places are of a primitive type, though not clearly neolithic, and in some cases

sherds of a Punic or Roman type are found in their vicinity. Ruins of so-called "round towers" are found at various places, and, in 1910, excavations were conducted round the "Torri tal Wilgia" near Mkabba, in order to determine its date and to draw its plan. The internal diameter of the building is about twenty-seven feet, and the walls, which are nearly five feet thick at the foundation, are made of rectangular blocks arranged in courses of which seven are still in place. The round towers of which clear remains survive are those of "Tal Jawar," "Ta Hlantun," "Ta Cieda," "Tal Bakkari".

#### MEGALITHIC SANCTUARIES.

There are in Malta a number of highly important megalithic monuments which are thought to have been sanctuaries. Some of them consisted originally of single chambers to which other rooms were added at a later period. The whole structure would thus represent centuries of human activity. Most of these buildings, standing in front of a large elliptical forecourt paved with coarse slabs, are enclosed by a high wall of monoliths, with the main entrance at the centre of the forecourt. The chambers, which are either oval or semicircu-

lar, are reached by a common corridor. The internal walls are concave, so as to support a roof or dome, the horizontal courses being corbelled, each course projecting slightly beyond the one below it. The large amount of debris found close to the ruins suggests that the buildings were further covered with stones so as to form one large pile, binding the various parts into a huge mass.

### HAJAR KIM.

The most extensive monument of this type is that known as "Hajar Kim," which lies about a mile from the village of Krendi, on a rocky undulating table-land overlooking the sea and the islet of Filfola. The name "Hajar Kim" means "standing stones", as for many centuries all that could be seen of the ruins was a number of standing stone blocks emerging from the soil. The site was covered with earth up to 1839, when, during the Governorship of Sir Henry Bouverie, the ruins were excavated under the direction of Mr. Vance of the Royal Engineers. In 1885, further excavations were made by Dr. A. A. Caruana, and Dr. Filippo Vassallo who drew an excellent plan of the ruins. A further examination was made in



1908 by Tagliaferro, Ashby, Peet and the present writer.

The ruins consist of a main building with a number of smaller ones grouped round it. The main entrance looks towards the south, and is in the centre of an elliptical paved forecourt. The façade is made of massive slabs placed vertically, with footing blocks in front of them. A corridor, made of three pairs of vertical slabs and paved with large flagstones, leads into an oval area about forty-seven feet long and eighteen feet wide. This area ends in two apses, separated by high partitions, each formed of a single slab in which a quadrangular entrance is cut. There are four main recesses in this area in which, at the time of the excavation, a finely cut altar, a slab ornamented with spirals, and seven stone statuettes were found.

A passage leads to the second area which is larger than the first. On the eastern side, it ends in an apse seven feet six inches high, composed of eighteen vertical slabs surmounted by two courses of oblong blocks. The apse was originally reduced in size by a number of vertical slabs placed on end. A high wall closed this area on the western side, but, by the removal of a small slab,



this apse is now in communication with another room.

In the main area, recesses in the wall are roofed over with three large slabs resting on two vertical stones. To the left of the entrance stand two quaintly shaped altars, one on each side of a doorway leading to a smaller room. This room contains two recesses with stone altars; a third recess on the right has an altar hewn out of a single block. Most of the stones are decorated with small, regular pitmarks which makes it probable that this was the most sacred recess in the whole building.

To the west of the main area, a few steps lead up to an oval room with carefully finished walls and a hard floor made of beaten earth. A small niche facing the entrance is approached through a window-like opening, of which the lower portion, or sill, is deeply grooved at the sides, as if cords had rubbed against it for a long time. A limestone pillar, found in this room, may have been a betyl or stone of veneration.

The several rooms forming the western part of the building spreading fan-like, appear to be later additions. Originally, entered from the west by independent doorways, they are

now accessible from the main building, through a casual opening in the wall.

One of the broken monoliths in the outside walls of these rooms is of exceptional interest. On close examination, the feet of two corpulent figures, cut in bas-relief, can be made out. A standing figure of the same type was cut in a vertical block, a few feet to the left, but, unfortunately, the stone is so badly weathered that the lines of the figure are very indistinct.

In a third oval chamber, attached to the main building, close to the two rooms just described, are symmetrical niches and wall slabs, on the northern side. This floor is at a level slightly higher than that of the main building. The doorway is flanked by two conical cup-like pits.

The boundary wall of the main building is remarkable for the huge dimensions of its stones. On the north-east corner, a slab is nine feet high, two feet thick, and twenty-one feet long; another block, on the north side, is seventeen feet high. Sunk in the thick wall, between these two stones, a shrine with a small semicircular apse at the back, is filled up with a stone pillar, probably a stone of veneration, six feet six inches high. A

triangular slab, in front of it, may have been used as an altar.

A group of smaller ruins may be seen close to the main building. To the east, is a group of circular enclosures with paved passages, door-sills, niches and altar-tables, just as in the main building, but the walls have weathered badly and disappeared in many places. Another group of ruins can be seen to the north at about thirty yards from the main building. Still visible, although partly destroyed, are two oval areas of a type identical with that of the main ruins.

In nearly every doorway at Hajar Kim the stone uprights are pierced by holes, apparently for the reception of cross-beams; other holes meant, probably, for the insertion of ropes, are found in most of the vertical slabs, especially in those flanking the doorways. These holes are usually drilled symmetrically on opposite faces of the walls, but they are sometimes found in such positions as to make it very doubtful for what purpose they were intended. The pitmarking which characterises many of the stone of the Maltese prehistoric monuments, was doubtless a form of decoration. The holes were carefully drilled, with flint borers, at regular intervals

although on some of the stones the pit-marks are more crowded than on others.

There was no trace of metals at Hajar Kim; but statuettes of stone or clay, flint tools and personal ornaments made of shell, stone or clay were found, together with a great number of potsherds of excellent workmanship and varied designs. All these objects, the product of a late neolithic civilization, are now exhibited in the Valletta Museum.

#### MNAIDRA.

About half a mile to the west of "Hajar Kim," on a small terrace overlooking the cliffs and the sea, stands another group of megalithic ruins, first excavated in 1840, described in detail by Mayr in 1898, and carefully re-examined in 1908. They consist of two groups of buildings independent of each other, with separate boundary walls, and on different levels.

The entrance to the higher or northern building faces south-east and is placed at right angles to the main wall. The first space is an elliptical area, fiftyfour feet in length, with well-finished walls made of a course of slabs placed on end and surmounted

by two courses of blocks. There are no niches in this room, but two recesses, formed by uprights in front of the entrance may have contained pillars or statuettes.

The walls of the next elliptical area are similar to those of the first one. A deep recess, enclosed by six slabs placed on end, faces the entrance. Two vertical stones at the sides support a large slab about ten feet by four. At the southern end of this area a highly finished window-like entrance leads to a niche constructed at a lower level, filled by an altar-table consisting of a slab of stone supported in the middle by a cylindrical pedestal.

Leaving this building, one walks down to the lower one, adjoining the first building at its south-west corner. This second building has a paved forecourt and a series of rectangular blocks placed along the façade apparently intended to afford sitting accommodation for worshippers. The walls are made of unhewn blocks of coralline limestone, a hard stone found in the neighbourhood; at Hajar Kim, a softer and lighter limestone was used.

The entrance, carefully constructed of large slabs, is covered by a lintel nearly ten feet long by four feet broad, and is paved

with flagstones. The lintels have numerous holes for wooden bars or ropes. The large area, reached through this passage, is over forty-five feet long and twenty-three feet wide. A stone slab, six and a half feet long, is fixed at the southern end of the apse and a recess in the left wall contains a trilithon, or table-like construction, five feet two inches high, with a lintel nine feet nine inches long.

To the right of the northern apse, a window-like opening leads to a triangular room at a higher level. At the southern end of this room a graceful niche with a window-like opening, contains a shrine made of well finished slabs of stone resting on a slightly bulging pedestal very carefully worked.

In the lower area to the south-west, a very elaborate doorway leads to a room which appears to have been peculiarly sacred. The pillars, lintel, and slabs forming the doorway are highly finished and elaborately pitmarked. The room is rectangular, with niches to the north, south and west. Each niche is formed of a pair of uprights with a block laid across their tops, while a table in the western niche is further propped by a central pillar.

Facing the main entrance of the temple,

in the main area, is a well-built, and well-paved passage, leading to a small rectangular room. This passage was once covered with long slabs, one of which, pierced in the centre by a round hole, now lies on the floor of the large area. In the middle of the passage is a similar hole which would correspond to the hole in the lintel if the latter were in place. The two holes received probably the pivots of a swinging door.

The room at the end of the passage contains a rectangular niche with a fine trilithon, of which the horizontal slab is nearly ten feet long. The adjoining room to the north, at a slightly higher level, is not so well finished as the others. In this room several clay figures representing diseased parts of the human body were found, under the floor of beaten earth, suggesting that the place was sacred to a healing deity.

A splendid collection of objects obtained from these ruins in 1908, and now preserved in the Valletta Museum, shows that Mnaidra belongs to the same stage of civilisation as the Hajar Kim and Gozo sanctuaries.



## IL MISKA

To the north-west of "Mnaidra," on the top of the "Maghlak" plateau, a set of six water tanks are dug in the solid rock. These tanks known as "Il Miska," the watering place, are round or oval in shape varying in depth from six to fifteen feet. At one time they were covered with large slabs of stone, most of which lie now broken at the bottom. One tank is still covered, and shows an opening in the centre of the original slabs from which water could be drawn. Rain water finds its way into the tanks along shallow channels cut in the surface. It is probable that these tanks furnished water to the Mnaidra and Hajar Kim sanctuaries.

## CORDIN.

Corradino – "Cordin," or better "Kortin," the rocky headland which rises sheer from the sea at the south-west end of the Grand Harbour, between the French Creek and Casal Paula road, contains groups of megalithic buildings extending from the edge of the cliffs to the place where the Hal Salfieni Hypogeum was excavated, about a mile to



the south-west. The Hal Tarxien sanctuary stands only a mile away to the south, and it is easy to imagine that in neolithic times the whole plateau from Casal Paula to the Grand Harbour was peopled by a prosperous community.

Extensive military works have caused the destruction of some of the ruins, but enough remains to give us some idea of the character of the buildings and the culture of the people who raised them.

Dr. A. A. Caruana, in 1896, mentioned five groups of ruins standing close together, and gave plans of two. These five groups were all within the bounds of land acquired by the Naval Authorities, but since that time another building has been discovered to the south-east, on the so called "Xaghra ta Cordin," and yet another one on top of the hill where the "Hal Saflieni Hypogeum," was dug out.

The Western group of ruins is the smallest of the three now remaining. Although they are in a very dilapidated condition a series of definite areas enclosed by walls of low stones can clearly be traced. This building has been described as having three entrances, but only two can now be seen. Mayr considers that this building and the one next to

it were dwelling places, but the potsherds and the small objects obtained from them in 1908 do not differ much from those found in the sanctuaries of "Mnaidra" and "Hajar Kim."

The Eastern group of buildings lies just behind the military detention barracks and a portion of the ruins must have been destroyed in 1871, when the ditch surrounding the barracks was cut. The buildings are in a better state of preservation than the Western group, but their Southern portion has practically disappeared. A large oval area, connected with two elliptical rooms, can be made out, and another oval room, to the south, opens into a kind of court and other small, badly defined, areas.

Doorways flanked by large vertical slabs can still be seen, with a number of large holes for wooden beams and smaller double holes for ropes. Two small cylindrical pillars which probably supported stone tables, as at "Mnaidra," were found. Grinders and mortars of lava and other hard stones, flint scrapers, animal bones, shells, and a great variety of potsherds obtained during the excavation of 1908, are now in the Valletta Museum.

In 1909, a mound on the "Xaghra ta Cordin" to the south of the road leading

from the Marsa to the detention barracks, was excavated. (a) This ruin consists of four groups of rooms independent of each other. The façade is deeply curved, and consists of massive slabs, placed vertically with footing blocks in front of them. The area in front of the façade is paved with irregular slabs of stone. Two sets of rooms are reached through two separate entrances; that on the south-eastern side having a projecting threshold and a passage built of vertical slabs. Beyond this passage are two circular rooms with floors of beaten earth and walls formed of large rough blocks, with smaller ones above them.

The second entrance is more elaborate, and is furnished with a threshold and a regular slab pavement forming a long passage. This leads to an area paved with large slabs around which are grouped three rough circular apses. The apse in front and that on the right, have no doorways, but can be entered by overstepping a low wall. To the south of the central apse, at a higher level, lies a long block of hard Malta stone, in which seven trough-like depressions are worn smooth by friction. It is probable that this block was

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(a) Annual Report of the Museum 1910

used for crushing grain with stone grinders. Below the trough, a smooth stone slab on which the ground meal was collected is still in place. The apse to the left of the entrance probably encroaches on a portion of an older apse walled with pillar-like blocks, and containing niches formed of vertical slabs.

The rest of the building is irregular and shows signs of having been re-arranged at different times. Grinders, pillars, mallets, slingstones and other stone objects were found in great numbers, together with flint scrapers and flint flakes, borers, and personal ornaments; abundant potsherds were obtained from the ruins. Every type of Maltese neolithic ware was here represented.

### HAL TARXIEN.

The latest excavation of a megalithic temple in Malta was that conducted by the present writer at Hal Tarxien between the years 1915 and 1920. This sanctuary, which is of the same type as "Mnaidra" and "Gigantia," lies between the villages of Tarxien and Paula, not far from the Hal Saflieni Hypogeum.

The building consists of three parallel sets of double apses, with a main entrance

to the south. The innermost or northern apses are very simple, and have a niche between them just opposite the entrance. The middle apses are larger, and have entrances to the side niches and chambers on the south. On the walls of one of the eastern chambers two bulls and a sow are cut in low relief. The southern set of apses appears to have been constructed at a later period, for it is lavishly decorated with spiral patterns in low relief. Two stone blocks display a delicate frieze of wild goats, and in a corner to the right of the entrance, in front of a shrine erected on a decorated altar table, was raised a colossal stone statue.

The stone statuettes, personal ornaments, stone and bone implements, potsherds and carved stones obtained from this temple, by far exceed in importance anything yet discovered in the Maltese Islands, and throw a flood of light on the earlier megalithic discoveries.

### THE HAL SALFLIENI HYPOGEUM.

The Hal Salflieni Hypogeum is cut in the soft rock of the hilltop overlooking the Marsa, not far from the Cordin and the Tarxien ruins. A building of the Cordin type

existed until lately on top of the Hypogeum, but its remains were dispersed when the block of buildings on the southern end of Hal Salfieni street was built. Fortunately, some of the larger slabs with window-like openings and a few pillars were discovered and photographed when the street was opened.

When the Hypogeum was discovered, in 1902, it was full of rubbish, and the lower rooms contained water which found its way from the surface. The Hypogeum consists of four sets of caves and galleries cut at different levels in the white calcareous rock. No trace of natural caverns can be seen, and although advantage was taken of natural fissures, this extraordinary monument was dug throughout in the solid rock.

Numerous flint implements and polished stone objects were discovered in the course of the long excavation, but no bronze or other metal. This fact, combined with the marks left by flint tools on the rock surface, and with the personal ornaments and pottery collected, leads one to believe that the monument was dug out in Neolithic times.

The original entrance was through a door-way now buried under Hal Salfieni street, so that the present one was made when the place was being cleared. Descending the

modern stairway, one lands in the middle storey which contains a kind of passage with a trilithon in front; a series of caves are on the left and several others are at a higher level on the right. The first cave on the left of the entrance is roughly circular, and at a level below the passage. The curved wall on the left of the doorway has three large niches, cut in the rock, the central one being enlarged into a small cave. Under a wide cornice projecting below these niches, three more cabins, without any symmetrical relation to the upper ones, are hollowed. The wall on the right is also concave, and has window-like openings, of which the smallest, at a level higher than the others, overhangs a deep pit in the chamber beyond.

To the west of this cave is a kind of corridor, leading to a room at a lower level, with highly finished walls, niches and recesses, of which the ceiling is richly decorated with designs in red paint. This may have served the purpose of an oracular room.

At the end of the corridor, is a circular room with deeply curved walls and ceiling adorned with spirals and hexagons in red paint. On the eastern side of this room two steps lead down to the best chamber of the Hypogeum, in which two broad



cornices overlap to form a kind of dome. The curved wall below them is divided, by neatly cut pillars, into three symmetrical niches, of which the middle one leads to a deeper chamber at a lower level, probably used as a treasury house. A striking feature of the upper room is the absence of red paint so common in the other chambers.

A flight of steps cut in the rock leads from this room to a lower storey, consisting of a series of caves, of which one has a deep niche in front facing the steps. At the western end of this series of caves four circular recesses, are dug out at a lower level. The whole lower storey is freely decorated with red paint.

Returning to the corridor in the middle storey, one faces a group of caves at a higher level, not far from the original entrance in the Hal Salfieni street. These caves with different floor levels, were entered separately by neat doorways and well-squared trilithons. Of these, the jambs are nearly all in place, but the lintels, in the course of time, have disappeared.

The Hal Salfieni Hypogeum was probably intended for a sanctuary, niches and additional rooms being added later on. Later still, the people, wishing to have the bones





Cliffs at Xlendi—Gozo.



Marsalforn Bay—Gozo.



Wied il-Ghasel — Malta

of their dead buried in holy ground, deposited them in the various rooms about the shrine. This would explain the presence of the enormous collection of human bones mixed with fragments of neolithic pottery and personal ornaments. On examination, it was found that in less than four cubic metres of soil the bones of about one hundred and twenty bodies were buried. From the volume of the bone deposit found in all the caves, it would appear that the remains of about seven thousand bodies were interred here.

The objects found in the Hypogeum include stone implements, flint tools, alabaster, clay and stone statuettes, and a great variety of personal ornaments, such as shell-beads and votive axes of hard stones. Bones of animals, used presumably for sacrificial purposes, as well as a number of land and sea shells, have been found. No refuse heaps, hearths, cinders or domestic utensils, that would point out to the site being used as a dwelling, were met with.

### GIGANTIA.

It is evident that in Neolithic times Gozo was not behind the main Island in

culture. There are numerous megalithic remains in the smaller Island, but those known respectively as the "Gigantia" and "Santa Verna" are so peculiar as to deserve special notice.

The so-called "Gigantia" ruins, situated in the north-eastern part of the hill of "Ix-Xaghra" or "Kaccia," first explored in about 1820, were described by La Marmora in 1834. They consist of two buildings, similar in type, each containing two elliptical areas connected by a short corridor, and ending in a semicircular apse. The two buildings face east, and have separate entrances. The arrangement recalls that of Mnajdra, but the whole structure is on a larger scale. At one point, a boundary wall twenty feet high is still standing, but here and there the original huge walls gave way and now encumber the open areas of the temple.

The southern building is the more extensive of the two. A large elliptical slab serves the purpose of a treshold, the doorway being formed of three magnificent slabs, of which only the vertical ones remain. A paved corridor, about thirteen feet in length, opens on to a large elliptical area, fifty feet long. The northern apse of this area is enclosed by a wall of which some of the

remaining blocks are adorned with a well cut geometrical design. Another slab near by, is decorated in a similar fashion. The floor of the apse is paved with large slabs, but the pillars and slabs, which once formed niches and shrines, have fallen down and lie in heaps all round.

A second corridor leads to an elongated area seventy feet long. The central part of this corridor is paved with large slabs, and a partition of well-squared, pitmarked blocks divides the central apse from the main part of the area.

On one of the flagstones of the pavement, not far from the septum, a Phoenician inscription of nine letters was lately discovered, but not yet deciphered.

In the angle formed by the eastern wall of the area with the corridor, a stone block bears in low relief the figure of a serpent. The southern apse contains a series of square niches formed of pillars and slabs, now in ruins.

The northern building, as a whole, is similar to the southern one, but the internal arrangement is somewhat different. There is no attempt to ornamentation, and very few niches or septa have been found. The two buildings have a common boundary wall.



The stones used are mostly unhewn or very roughly dressed, and some are of enormous size, not less than seventeen feet long. One slab measures as much as thirteen by eighteen feet.

### SANTA VERNA.

Leaving the Gigantia grounds and going up the hill to the top of the Xaghra plateau, the road to the west narrows to a lane and leads to a rocky plain with straggling patches of red soil, where in 1911, the ruins of a megalithic building were discovered. The site was well chosen for a sanctuary as, to the north, the picturesque cone of the "Mirzuk" hill towers over Marsalforn bay, and the sea is visible on all sides.

The building appears to have consisted of five areas, with floors of beaten earth and walls raised upon the foundation of an earlier megalithic structure. That this site was for a long time inhabited, is evident from the large number of fireplaces, the heaps of food refuse and the quantities of delicate potsherds that were found. In one of the rubbish heaps disjointed human bones were found, and in another spot two skeletons, in

a supine position, protected by a wall of loose stones.

These ruins apparently represent a site in use at four successive periods, as the floor of some of the apses was laid down more than once before it reached the present level. The pottery is of the same type as that found in the Malta sanctuaries, but the polished engraved ware indicates a far higher degree of artistic excellence and technical skill.

### BRONZE AGE.

Until 1915, no trace of the Bronze Age period had ever been found in either Malta or Gozo, but in September of that year, a Bronze Age burial site was found among the debris of the Hal Tarxien sanctuary. It would appear that this building was abandoned towards the close of the Neolithic Age, but, after the ruins had been covered with about three feet of silt, they were made use of by a people familiar with bronze implements who cremated their dead and deposited the remains in cinerary urns. Numerous jars full of cremated human remains, personal adornments and small clay vases, were discovered packed into a small space,

about three feet above the floor of the neolithic building.

The discovery demonstrates the advent in Malta of a Bronze Age people who were accustomed to wear a great variety of personal ornaments and to burn their dead. The implements found appear to be of the type used in Crete in the Middle Minoan Period, that is about 2000 B. C.

Since the discovery of the Tarxien temples many sites were recognized to have been utilised by Copper and by Bronze Age peoples. Several of the megalithic buildings yield pottery of the Metal Period, the most important among those being Bahria, Borg-in-Nadur and Imjar which, although evidently built by the Stone Age people, were, in later days, occupied by Bronze Age settlers.

There is such a marked difference between the early, well-made pottery of the Stone Age and the clumsy ware of the Bronze Period that it is easy, in Malta, to distinguish the products of the two Ages.

This rapid survey of the more important prehistoric monuments is sufficient to give some idea of the early civilisation of the Maltese Islands of which the numerous megalithic ruins are not known to exist in any other country.



Rough stone monuments are abundant in Asia Minor, North Africa and Western Europe, but scarce in Sicily. This might be explained by a wave of emigration, at the dawn of the neolithic age, moving from East to West through the small islands of the Mediterranean, without touching the Sicilian coast. Civilisation, however, can move from one country to another by the simpler way of trade, and the existence of prehistoric trade routes would sufficiently explain the spread of many customs. Once such a route is established it is easy to conceive that successive waves of immigrations would follow.

The Maltese Islands were in the very centre of the movement of the civilisation which produced buildings of the megalithic type, and we may even suggest that Malta may have been the centre whence that movement has spread, for it is certain that megalithic architecture in the Maltese Islands assumed forms and proportions unknown in other countries.

## CHAPTER IV.

### **The Phoenicians and the Romans**

It is not known exactly at what period the Phoenicians first landed in Malta, and as the monuments left by them here are few and not particularly characteristic, one must turn to general European history for light upon this question.

The Phoenicians are believed to have been a people of Canaanitish descent who from the fringe of the Arabian desert passed Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon and settled on the sea coast and in the nearest islands. Until the close of the Hyksos period, about 1500 B.C., we have no history of Phoenicia though some writers affirm that Tyre was founded in B.C., 1750. It is under the 18th dynasty of Egypt that we hear of rich and autonomous Phoenicians who at the height of their prosperity carried their wares all over the Mediterranean. Their

ships sailed westward laden with incense, dyed cloth, bronze and glassware, gems and personal ornaments, and returned full of gold-dust, raw material and other products of the foreign stations.

In their western progress, the Phoenicians proceeded along the African coast, and thence, by way of the Maltese Islands, to the west and north coasts of Sicily, thus avoiding the Greeks, who skirted the southern extremity of Italy and occupied first the eastern and afterwards the north-eastern shores of Sicily. This tacit understanding between Greek and Phoenician traders seems to have been adhered to for a long time, for there is no evidence that the Greeks ever attempted to become masters of Malta, although there are signs of Greek intercourse in the third century B. C.

The exact period when the Carthaginians supplanted the Phoenicians in the Maltese Islands is not known. The city of Carthage, founded by the Tyrians in 822 B.C., in a comparatively short time grew to be a powerful city, and the Phoenicians of the west ousted by slow degrees their eastern brethren, until, in the course of time, the Tyrian colonies passed without a struggle into the hands of Carthage. Historians agree that by

the time of Ashur-Bani-Pal, king of Assyria, between 668 and 626 B. C., the authority of Phoenicia was no longer recognised in any of the colonies which had formerly been hers.

In course of time, the great republic of Carthage became mistress of a territory embracing about three hundred towns, all created and maintained by commercial intercourse. In the silver mines of Spain alone, she employed at one time 40,000 men. This remarkable growth of commerce was largely due to great fore-sight and to liberal methods in dealing with customers. The Carthaginians had a well organised system of depots and bonding stores, and they made use of many commercial devices, such as insurance, loans, bottomry, and a system of leather money.

It is remarkable that although the Carthaginians used a cursive script very freely, they never developed a national literature. Their Semitic language is known to us only through numerous funeral inscriptions cut on grave-stones, but for any written account of the people and their deeds we must turn to their successful rivals the Romans.

Both in Malta and Gozo several Phoenician inscriptions of the late period were found. The most remarkable is the one cut on

two similar marble cippi of which one is preserved in the Valletta Museum.

The inscription is bilingual, Phoenician and Greek; the one in Phoenician says: "A vow from Abdosir and his brother Osirxamar sons of Osirxamar, son of Abdosir, to my Lord Melkart, Lord of Tyre, that he may hear their words and bless them".

The Greek version is:

"Dionysius and Serapion sons of Serapion of Tyre to Hercules Archigetas."

This Maltese inscription served a great purpose, for as the famous Rosetta stone became, in the hands of Champollion, the key to the hieroglyphics of ancient Egypt, so the Maltese cippus gave to Barthelemy the means of constructing the Phoenician alphabet.

In Malta, it is not always easy to distinguish between early Phoenician relics and those of the Carthaginians. The oldest known monuments in the Islands, usually attributed to Punic influence, are cave and shaft-tombs, containing objects which can be assigned to a period extending between the tenth century B. C. and the third century of our era. Some of these cave-tombs may be attributed to the early Phoenicians, of whom Renan has said

that their tombs are their most characteristic archaeological legacy, although they are hardly to be distinguished from the Carthaginian types common in North Africa.

The furniture of these tombs, moreover, appears to have been made under Carthaginian influence, as of the archaic pottery, gawdy ornaments, and many-coloured glass beads and vessels, so characteristic of Phoenician manufacture, there is hardly a trace.

M. Babelon's description of Phoenician tombs applies in all respects to most of those found in Malta; they are said to be hewn in the rock and access to them is obtained by means of notches cut in the wall for the insertion of the hands and feet, or by a flight of steps cut on one side of the shaft. The sepulchral chamber usually contains mortuary furniture of alabaster, glass, terracotta and marble, idols of clay, amulets, statuettes imported from Egypt, clay lamps, amphorae and personal ornaments. Women were buried with necklaces, rings, bracelets, ear-rings, metal mirrors, pyxes for cosmetics, perfumes, and other toilet articles used during life.

Maspero's description of their cave-tombs also applies to those found in Malta. He says that in Syria, under the Phoenicians, the corpse,

anointed with perfumes and enveloped in linen, often impregnated with substances which retarded decomposition, was placed in a natural grotto, or in a cave cut in the solid rock. Sometimes a sarcophagus or coffin was used for the burial. On and around the body, amulets, jewels, objects of daily use, vessels with perfumes and household utensils were piously laid, together with meat and drink. The entrance to the tomb was closed, and on the spot was erected a cippus called by the Semites "Nephesh," which means breath or soul (Maltese, Nifs).

Lately, however, the present writer has proved that some of the earliest rock-cut tombs were in use in prehistoric times (see *Archeological Journal* Oct. 1928).

## THE ROMANS

In course of time, the prosperity of Carthage gave umbrage to Rome who challenged and broke the supremacy of her great rival in the Punic Wars (264 B. C.—146 B. C.). Livy (XX cap. 51) relates after the victory of the Roman fleet over the Carthaginian at Lilybaeum (Marsala), the Consul Titus Sempronius sailed to Malta where Hamilcar surrendered to him with



about 2,000 men. Having sold most of the prisoners at Lilybaeum, Titus Sempronius set sail for the Lipari Islands, where a fleet of the enemy was reported to have assembled. This is the only record left by a Latin writer of the annexation of Malta to the Roman Empire, but it clearly establishes the fact that at the close of the Second Punic War (216 B. C.) the small islands south of Italy were lost to Carthage.

That the Roman rule was a long one is affirmed by history and by a number of architectural remains, inscriptions, coins and other monuments testifying to the diffusion of Roman culture both in Malta and Gozo.

It would appear that the Maltese were granted an autonomous government, with the privilege of sending ambassadors to Rome to plead their cases when necessary, and later, the island was made a *Municipium* and a few Maltese names were inscribed in the Quirine tribe. Before the establishment of the Empire, when Roman *propraetors* were nominated for the provinces, Malta appears to have formed part of the province of Sicily, for a Maltese coin bears the name of the *propraetor* of Sicily, C. Arruntanus Balbus. In Imperial times, the provinces were governed by *proconsuls*, *quaestors* and *procurators*, and



we learn, from an inscription in the Valletta Museum, that at one time Malta was governed by one Chrestion, "*proc. insularum Melit. et Gaul.*"

Aulus Licinus and Diodorus, both natives of Malta, are known to us as friends of Cicero, who in one of his orations (In Ver. V) shows how the praetor of Sicily, to which Malta was officially attached, tried to rob Diodorus of a number of chased gold vases, and how he obtained from Malta supplies of the rich cloth for which the island was then famous. In the same oration, Cicero tells us how Verres, who had never visited Malta, managed to rob a famous temple of its ivories, and of some statuettes of Victory, '*antiquo opere ac summa arte perfectae.*' This temple, dedicated to Juno, had never before been looted, neither during the Punic Wars, nor in the repeated invasions of pirates. When a fleet of Massinissa, king of Numidia, once visited Malta, the admiral took away from the same sanctuary some elephants' tusks of enormous size. Conscious of the reverence in which the temple was universally held, Massinissa returned the tusks to the temple, with an appropriate inscription to commemorate the event.

Under the circumstances, it does not

seem probable that a numerous Roman colony did ever settle in Malta, not only because the Romans rarely attempted to colonise the countries they conquered, but also because Malta had no other attractions but its harbours. Roman buildings, mainly villas in the country, are known to have existed in these Islands, but there is nothing to show that the inhabitants were in any way ethnologically affected, whilst Punic customs and the Punic tongue remained in use during the Roman occupation of the land.

The coins of the island, at the time of the Roman occupation, were the ordinary coins of the Empire; but local coins with Phoenician emblems, and in one case with a Phoenician inscription, (A.N.N.) were also circulated. These coins bear the words, Melitaion, Melitae, or Gauliton, in Roman or Greek letters.

In A. D. 58, Malta had the distinction of sheltering the Apostle Paul whose stay in the Island is described (1) by his travelling companion St. Luke in the Acts. He was on his way to Rome, sent thither by Festus, the Governor of Judea, in the charge of Julius a centurion. On the fourteenth day

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(1) Acts of the Apostles XXVII.

of the voyage, the ship caught by a gale, was wrecked at the mouth of a bay on the north-east coast of Malta, but the Apostle, with two hundred and seventyfive men, reached land in safety. St. Luke relates how the crew were greatly honoured during the three months of their stay, and how the Apostle healed many sick people, including the father of Publius, the chief man of the Island, whose guest he was for three days. During his stay, St. Paul preached the new faith to the islanders who, probably, had no difficulty in understanding his native tongue, a Canaanitish dialect, closely related to Maltese through early Arabic, the mother language of both.

#### EARLY CHRISTIANITY IN MALTA.

The early conversion of the Maltese to the Christian faith is proved not only by the words of the Acts. (XXVII and XXIII) but by archaeological records.

The thousands of rock-cut tombs met with all over the country in Malta, show clearly that for centuries the Maltese buried their dead in graves dug out in the rocks. This custom which, probably, originated in prehistoric times, continued throughout the

Phoenician, the Carthaginian and the Roman periods of the history of these Islands. The characters of the pagan tombs, dug out before the conversion of the bulk of the people to Christianity, do not differ materially from those prepared in the early days of the Faith, for the people could not, in a comparatively short time, change their burial customs in use for ages.

Changes in the construction of the rock-tombs occurred certainly after the 2nd. Century A.D., the most remarkable being the enlargement of the shaft and the construction of an ante-room or vestibule in which, it is surmised, a religious ceremony took place before the burial. (1)

Later on, we find that from the vestibule, corridors were cut leading to the graves. Most of these multiple graves were cut in private property, probably close to farm-houses, thus constituting family sepulchres. Public cemeteries or *catacombs* appear later, forming one of the most important features of Maltese Christian burial grounds, the *Ecclesia Fratrum*, in which proper interment with christian rites took place. An

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(1) See P. F. Bellanti—Studies in Maltese History. (Malta 1924)

exedral formation became then the rule of our early cemeteries thus affording a place of assembly for the burial and for the celebration of the Divine Mysteries.

A number of small catacombs are known to exist in these islands, of which the best are those at Mintna (Mkabba), tal-Liebru (Gudia), Ta San Ctald (Rabat), etc.

The larger Catacombs of St. Paul and S. Agata, at Rabat are constructed on such a scale as to rival those of Syracuse and in a way also those of Rome itself. In these catacombs we find numerous *loculi* or horizontal recesses, resembling the berths in a ship's cabin, and *Canopied table graves*, rectangular chest-like spaces to be covered with heavy stone, slabs, or clay tiles, giving to the tomb the appearance of a table. A special form of grave are the *saddle-backed, canopied tombs*, in imitation of the classical Greek sarcofagi, not met with in other foreign catacombs.

The most important feature of the Maltese catacombs, however, is the presence in the vestibules, of one or more round tables, cut in the rock, with slanted sides on which mourners reclined, in Roman fashion, in order to partake of a farewell repast. These are the famous *agape* or *eucharistic* tables

which are often depicted in the Roman cemeteries although the tables themselves have disappeared, probably owing to their being made of a perishable material.

This combination of table and *triclinium funebre* is the clearest sign of the early but formal establishment of the Christian faith in the Islands.

The Catholic Church was established in Malta at the very dawn of Christianity, and ecclesiastical authorities were duly constituted at an early date. Thus we find in the Church annals that in the time of Pope Gregory the Great, in the year 598, Lucullus, Bishop of Malta, was deposed, and a new bishop elected in his stead by the clergy and the people.

#### LATE ROMAN PERIOD

The Maltese Islands continued to prosper under the aegis of Rome, and their manufactures and natural products were well known in the capital of the Empire and in the eastern provinces.

In the course of time, the Empire, divided and pressed by internal and external enemies, began to wane. The Emperor Theodosius, in 397, divided his dominions between his two sons Honorius and Arcadius,

the latter having been assigned the Eastern portion, with capital at Byzantium. It is commonly believed, though without sufficient reason, that Malta was included in the Eastern Empire.

The years that followed were troubled ones. In 410, Rome was sacked by a mutinous force led by Alaric, a Roman general of Gothic birth. In 455, the Vandals, whose conquest of Africa had been confirmed by treaty with the Emperor Valentinian, crossed into Italy under the leadership of their king, Genseric, summoned by Valentine's widow to avenge her wrongs on the murderer of her husband. For fourteen days the Vandals pillaged Rome, and all the treasures, with a multitude of noble captives, were transported to Carthage.

In 533, Belisarius, general of the Emperor Justinian, reconquered Africa, and on his way to Sicily rested in the harbour of Malta. In the African campaign, five millions people are said to have been killed, and it is estimated that during the twenty years of the Gothic occupation, Italy lost fifteen millions of her inhabitants. These troubled times affected Malta by a greatly diminished commercial activity in her harbours. Some historians maintain the possibility



of the Island having been occupied, at a time, by the Goths and the Vandals, but no proof has ever been advanced in support of this assertion.

In 611, the Persian king, Chosroes II, attacked the Roman Empire, over-running in succession Syria, Egypt, and the Mediterranean shores up to Tripoli. He was finally defeated by the Emperor Heraclius in 628, and died in the same year in the prison into which he had been cast by his own son Siroes, who made peace with the Emperor, and gave up all his father's conquests.

But a yet more formidable danger threatened the Empire. In the words of Gibbon: "While the Emperor triumphed at Constantinople and Jerusalem, an obscure town on the confines of Syria was pillaged by the Saracens, and they cut in pieces some troops who advanced to its relief, an ordinary and trifling occurrence, had it not been the prelude of a mighty revolution. These robbers were the apostles of Mahomet; their fanatic valour had emerged from the desert; and in the last eight years of his reign, Heraclius lost to the Arabs the same provinces which he had rescued from the Persians."



## CHAPTER V.

### **The Saracens, the Normans, the Suabians and the Angevins**

The Byzantine Empire came into conflict with Islam, for the first time, in A. D. 629, when a Moslem force of 3,000 men was defeated by an Imperial army at Muta, in the neighbourhood of the Dead Sea. In 630 Mahomet, unopposed by the Byzantines, raided and subjugated some Christian and Jewish settlements in North Arabia. Preparations for another raid were interrupted by the death of Mahomet, in 652, but under his successor, the power of Islam spread rapidly; Syria was subjected by the year 638, and Egypt by 642.

The conquest of Africa was attempted again and again, but was not finally accomplished until 698, when Carthage was taken by Abd-il-Malek, the sixth Caliph of the Ommiad dynasty. From this time onward, Sicily was periodically raided by the Arab fleet.

In 800, the African province of Kirwan achieved independence under 'Ibrahim-ibn-Aghlab' founder of the dynasty of the Aghlabids, and his successors, who proceeded to occupy Sicily as a stepping stone to the Continent of Europe. In 827, an army of 11,000 men disembarked at Mazzara; Palermo fell in 831, Messina in 832, and Syracuse in 878.

Mahomet, son of Khafadsha, occupied Malta in 870, but no details have, so far, come to light as to the manner in which the Island passed under the Moslem rule. It is probable that the Emir of Sicily sent a representative to Malta, though there is no record of such an arrangement in the detailed Sicilian chronicles of the period.

The Moslem rule in Malta was probably not particularly harsh, for we know that, on payment of a trifling sum, the Arabs were ready to guarantee freedom of worship to both Christians and Jews. We even read that in Syria the Caliph Moawiyah rebuilt the church of Edessa for his Christian subjects.

From the scarcity of monuments, cemeteries, and coins of the Arab period, not less than from the absence of historical information, we may conclude that the Saracenic occupation of Malta was purely mi-

litary, and that no extensive colonisation was attempted. Malta could, in fact, offer no temptation to a people who were already in possession of the rich and fertile lands of Sicily.

The fact that the only Saracenic cemetery in Malta was found close to the Roman House at Mdina, shows clearly that the Arab garrison did not settle anywhere beyond the Capital. During the Saracenic occupation, the natives must have kept aloof from the garrison that professed a religion so violently averse to Christianity, but their relations were not, probably, strained, for they understood each other. The Maltese, at that time, talked a Semitic tongue, developed under Punic influence, used all along the northern shores of the African Continent.

During 200 years of Moorish influence, the Maltese tongue must have absorbed a good number of Arabic words and phrases, but in this short period of time the military occupation of the Arabs could not affect neither the race nor the language of a large agricultural population in possession of the land since prehistoric ages.

The Saracens had not the power of keeping and developing the vast territories they had conquered. In Sicily, for instance,

three Arab Emirs ruled independently of one another and of the African Caliph. Discord was inevitable, and foreign invaders were encouraged by internecine feuds. The religion of the conquerors, moreover, kept them apart from their subjects and prevented an assimilation of races.

A good number of tomb-stones from Saracenic graves were found in the burial ground at Rabat, in the mound that covered the remains of the Roman Villa. Most of these tomb-stones bear inscriptions in Kufic characters, though some of them are written in ordinary early Arabic script; the inscriptions consist mainly of verses taken from the Koran.

### THE NORMANS

At the end of the 10th century, after two hundred years of Arabic rule, new elements began to appear in the South Italian provinces. Lower Italy was an arena for the great powers that contested the Mediterranean, the Moslems, the Byzantines, and the successors of Charlemagne.

The Normans first appeared in Italy in 1014, when some Norman adventurers came into Apulia at the request of Melo, a rebel against the Greek Empire. Melo was defeated,

but the Normans remained in Italy as hired swordsmen and were followed by others of their race. They were great fighters, and by the middle of the eleventh century their leader was recognized as Count of Apulia and a power in Italy.

The first Norman leaders came from the family of Tancred, a Norman knight, of whose twelve sons, ten sought their fortune in Italy. The three Normans, William, Drogo and Humphrey, became, in turn, chief of their party in Italy, but the greatest of Tancred's sons was Robert, surnamed Guiscard or "the Cunning." He came to Italy on the death of Humphrey in 1046, and in 1057, was made Count of Apulia. In the same year, he sent for his brother Roger, the youngest of the sons of Tancred, who joined him in Calabria and won his spurs in a successful campaign against the Greeks.

In the following year, Guiscard married Sigelgaita, sister of the Prince of Salerno, and in a short time, with the help of his brother, he completed the conquest of Calabria.

Roger now turned his attention to Sicily, for the last two hundred years dominated by the Moslems. With Guiscard's help he took Messina in 1061, and Palermo in

1072. He was rewarded by being made Count of Sicily, his brother retaining the suzerainty of the Island.

The taking of Palermo did not imply the complete conquest of Sicily; more than twenty years of fighting was indeed needed to destroy the power of the Moslems in the Island. At the end of 1085, Roger's fleet sailed into the harbour of Syracuse, and Noto surrendered in 1091. The victorious fleet was, in the same year, sent to Malta and Gozo, whose people accepted Roger's sovereignty and pledged themselves to an annual tribute. As soon as Roger became the supreme Lord of Sicily he fixed his abode at Messina (Troina) which thus became the official capital of the Kingdom.

The death of Guiscard in 1015, made his younger brother, for all practical purposes, the head of the family; technically, he became the vassal of Roger Borsa, Guiscard's son, but Roger made large concessions and Sicily remained in fact a free State.

Both in Sicily and in Malta, which from this date must be considered an integral part of the Sicilian realm, the Moslems were left undisturbed in their industries. The Saracenic names of the old offices were retained with slight modifications; "Emir" was latinised

into Ammiratus, "Kadi" into Gaitus, "Diwan" into Dihana, etc. The titles of "Sahib," (secretary) and "Katib," (notary,) remained in use in Court for centuries. Freedom of belief was also allowed, and Latins, Greeks, and Moslems were equally tolerated and equally subjected to the central power.

On the 22nd June, 1101, Roger died, and was succeeded by his son Simon, a lad of eight years, who died three years later. Roger's second son, Roger, then became Count, and ruled under the guidance of his mother until 1112 when he assumed the sovereignty at Palermo which became the new capital.

Sicily was, at this time, fertile and prosperous, but the ever-growing trade with the neighbouring countries was in continual need of protection against the Moslem corsairs, who made the sea route unsafe for pilgrims and merchants. To meet this evil, Count Roger built a powerful fleet which he placed under the command of experienced Greek sea-captains called Ammirati.

This navy gave Roger a great importance in Europe, and, on the death of his cousin William in 1127, he acquired the Duchy of Salerno-Apulia. Ruler of vast estates, he felt that they could only be firmly bound



together by a Crown. To proclaim himself King he required the sanction of the Holy See, at that time in great trouble owing to the claims of the anti-pope Anacletus. Roger believed that Anacletus would win at the end so he declared himself his partisan, and, plunging deeply into the European struggle, he lavished men and money in favour of the cause for over ten years.

Anacletus was not slow to reward Roger, who, by a Bull issued in 1130, was created King of Sicily, Calabria and Apulia, with rights over Naples, Capua and Benevento. Palermo was raised to a Metropolitan See, and in its Cathedral Roger was crowned King on Christmas Day, 1130.

It happened, however, that Innocent II came to be recognised by the Nations of Europe as the lawful Pontiff, and when he finally came into his own, the legitimacy of Roger's title was attacked. In 1137, the Emperor Lothair drove the Norman Prince out of Italy, and both Pope and Emperor agreed to invest a new Duke of Apulia. Before long however, Roger exterminated his rival, regained his Italian possessions, and extorted recognition from Pope Innocent.

The power of Roger's navy had meanwhile been used to enlarge the Sicilian king-

dom on the shores of Africa. The Admiral, George of Antioch, "Emir of Emirs and Archon of Archons", conquered the African coast from Tunis to Tripoli for his king. Roger became the most famous of Christian princes among the Moslems by reason of his military power and the toleration he showed both at home and abroad.

In 1146, Roger's forces invaded Greece and even succeeded in reaching Byzantium, but were eventually repulsed by the Emperor Manuel.

Roger died in 1154 at the age of fifty-one and was succeeded by his fourth son William, known as William the Bad, a title bestowed upon him by the baronial party which had always been the worst enemy of the Sicilian Monarchy.

After a reign of eleven years, William was succeeded by his son, William II, who commenced to reign alone in 1171. He was a recluse and never appeared at the head of his army. A great lover of Palermo, he built there the famous abbey of Monreale and "La Cuba." He restored the Kingdom, and finally died revered by all his subjects to whom he was known as William the Good. Dante numbers him with the just men of the world:

“E quel che vedi nell’arco declivo  
Gugliemo fu, cui quella terra plora,  
Che piange Carlo e Federico vivo.”

The legitimate male posterity of Tancred of Hauteville ended with William II, whose marriage with Johan, daughter of Henry II of England, had been childless. The throne was claimed by Henry, King of the Romans, son of the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, who had married Constance, last surviving child of Roger the Second. At William's death, in 1189, the unanimous wish of the people called to the throne Tancred of Lecce, an illegitimate son of Duke Roger, who reigned only four years, dying in 1194, a few days after his son and co-sovereign Reger III. During his short reign, Tancred created Margaritone di Brindisi “Count of Malta,” granting him the Islands as a noble fief.

At Tancred's death, the kingdom fell to Constance's husband, now an Emperor, under the title of Henry VI, who entered Palermo in 1194, thus bringing to an end the Norman dynasty of Southern Italy which had lasted with many vicissitudes for sixty years.

Henry VI who died in 1197, was succeeded by his son Frederick. During a reign



Cart-tracks to the south of Verdala Palace



Cart-tracks at Benjemma



The Gigantea megalithic Temple—Gozo

of fifty-two years he revived in Sicily the glory of Roger II's days. The new Emperor made himself powerful at the expense of the nobility, and every trace of Arab influence disappeared from Sicily. Frederick was a great thinker in an age of poets, and Dante called him one of the fathers of Italian song and the patron of the troubadours who made of Palermo a second capital of Romance poetry. In 1224, he founded, by direct Royal Act, the University of Naples, thus imitating Roger II who granted to Salerno a monopoly for the institution of a School of medicine.

### THE ANGEVINS

In 1250, Frederick died, and the Empire passed to his son Conrad, who reigned only four years. On his death, Frederick's natural son Manfred ascended the throne, but Pope Clement IV interfered, and, claiming the right to dispose of the crown of Sicily, invited Charles of Anjou and Provence to take over the Kingdom. Manfred marched against the invader, but fell in the battle of Benevento in 1266.

Two years later, Corradino, the young son of Conrad IV, left Germany to save his fathers' throne in the South, but was



overwhelmed and taken prisoner at Tagliacozzo and thence taken to Naples where he was executed.

No further obstacle remained to the complete triumph of Charles of Anjou and the new French dynasty he had founded. The French rule in Sicily and South Italy was, however, to be short-lived. The tyranny of the new ruler was felt by all classes of the people, and a vast conspiracy, set on foot to get rid of the French King, culminated in an open revolt known in history as the "Sicilian Vespers." On the 30th March 1282, a street brawl at Palermo developed into a free fight and a popular rising against the Government. The French soldiers with their wives and children were massacred by the populace, abetted by the crews of an Aragonese fleet that happened to be anchored in the harbour. "Down with the French" and "long live the Aragonese our Saviours", were the cries of the Sicilians, at Palermo first, and, subsequently, over the whole Island.

Peter III of Aragon lost no time in joining his fleet at Palermo where he was received with jubilation by the people who at once admitted his claim to the crown of Sicily through his wife, the daughter of Manfred, fallen at Benevento.



## CHAPTER VI

### **The Aragonese and the Castilians**

The intervention of Peter of Aragon was well-timed, for the people admired his pluck and wanted a manly King to take the reins of the Government. Peter was crowned King of Sicily in 1283 when Charles of Anjou was beaten both on land and on sea. Malta happened to be a witness to the last act of the Angevin drama. On the 8th June 1283, Roger de Loria, the Aragonese Admiral, appeared before Malta with his twenty-two sails in search of the French fleet. Corner, the French Commander, had his fleet of twenty-seven vessels in the Grand Harbour and could not but accept battle. Early next morning, he weighed anchor and gallantly sailed out to meet the enemy. A fierce battle ensued, ending in a crushing defeat for Corner. Twenty-one French ships were lost and the admiral himself was killed. Loria, who had lost five hundred men in the encounter, entered the harbour of Marsamuscetto and landed in the Island, but he did not, at this

time, try to dislodge the garrison of the Castello a Mare (now fort Sant Angelo).

The Maltese recognized the Aragonese as their legitimate rulers, and presented the admiral with provisions and a goodly sum of money. Loria then returned to Sicily, but came back later with twenty-two galleys and twelve hundred men under the command of Manfredi Lanza. The castle of Malta was taken and its garrison removed to Sicily.

Having finally defeated the Angevins, King Peter now turned his mind to putting his kingdom in order, but in 1295 he died and was succeeded in Aragon by his eldest son Alfonso, and in Sicily by his second son James.

Six years later, on the death of Alfonso, James was called to the throne of Aragon, and his brother Frederick was proclaimed King by the Sicilians on the 25th March 1296, under the title of Frederick II.

At this time, Malta although forming an integral part of the Sicilian kingdom, was usually granted as a noble fief by the King. The young Conard, son of Conard IV, had created Niccolò Pistore, son of Count Henry of Malta, "Count of Malta," and King James had approved his passing the title to Donna Lucina, daughter of Pistore and wife of

Raimondo da Moncada, a Sicilian Baron. King Frederick gave Donna Lucina the County of Augusta, and created a new "Count of Malta," a Knight Templar, Roger di Flor. Later on, he gave the title to his own son, the Infante Don Juan, Duke of Athens. The style of "Count of Malta" was likewise granted by Charles II of Naples to the Admiral Roger di Loria, but this was an honorary and not an effective title.

In 1337, Frederick II died and his son Peter, who had been associated with him in the kingly office, succeeded him as Peter II; he died in 1342, after a short reign, and his son Lewis became King.

During Lewis' reign the Maltese petitioned that their Islands might be governed direct from Sicily, and on the 7th October 1350, the King signed at Messina a decree by which Malta and Gozo were no longer to be granted as a noble fief, but to have all the privileges of Sicily.

On the death of Lewis in 1355, his brother Frederick, known as "the simple," came to the throne as Frederick III. He was a weak king and had to leave the management of his State in the hands of Queen Joanna I of Naples. Joanna anxious to reward the loyalty of Niccolò Acciaiuoli,

Duke of Amalfi, ignored the promises made by King Lewis to the Maltese and granted the islands to her favourite, who thus became "Count of Malta" in 1357. The title passed to his son Angelo, and in 1372 to his grandson Robert. In 1371 the Maltese, having favoured the Venetians, were attacked by ten Genoese galleys and much damage was done to private property. The king, much aggrieved at this outrage, and wishing to appease the population, visited Malta in 1372.

The Governor, or "Capitano" of the city of Malta (Mdina), was Giacomo di Pellegrino, a Maltese nobleman who had married Margaret Aragon, daughter of the king's natural son William; he was away when Frederick visited Malta, and the *de facto* Governor was Murina, who obtained from the king the fief of the lands of Bucana.

Frederick III, following the example of Queen Joanna, created his natural son William of Aragon "Count of Malta."

At the death of Frederick, in 1377, the Crown passed to his daughter Mary, a minor, who was placed under the tutelage of Artale of Aragon, Count of Mistretta. The political unrest in Sicily forced the young queen to take refuge at the Court of her uncle,

Martin I of Aragon, where she fell in love with her cousin, the younger Martin, and married him in 1391. In 1392, the queen returned to Sicily, and as a reward to the nobleman Guglielmo Raimondo de Moncada, who had favoured her marriage, she granted him the islands of Malta as a Marquisate. In 1393, Moncada renounced the Marquisate in favour of Artale of Aragon. Between 1393 and 1397, Malta was torn by continuous strifes between the partisans of Moncada and those of Aragon, a period of great misery known by some writers as that of the "Tyrants".

After repeated petitions by the Maltese, Martin of Sicily at last interfered in this shameful strife, and a solemn decree, published at Catania on the 27th November 1397, declared the Maltese Islands to be part of the Royal demesne, and forbade that they should, under any condition, be given as a Noble fief. The privileges granted to the Maltese by his predecessors were confirmed, and local high offices were reserved to the Maltese. It is from this date that we find the Governors of the City (Mdina) called "Capitani di Verga," and the Magistrates or Jurats regularly chosen from the Maltese gentry. Moreover, a Maltese

Bishop, Fra Mauro Calì, was appointed to the vacant See.

Martin of Sicily was so greatly loved by his wife's subjects, whom he had benefited by just and liberal laws, that on the death of Queen Mary in 1402, he was proclaimed sole sovereign of Sicily. By an established rule, the Crown should have passed to Martin I of Aragon, Mary's uncle, but the latter agreed to waive his claims in favour of his son.

A year after the queen's death, Martin of Sicily married Bianca, daughter of Charles III, King of Navarre, but had no issue. In 1409, on his way back from Sardinia, where he quelled a rising against the House of Aragon, Martin was taken ill and died; his father assumed the Crown as Martin II, appointing his daughter-in-law Bianca, Regent of Sicily in accordance with the wish of his dead son. Martin II's reign was short, for he died in May 1410; he was succeeded by his nephew Ferdinand, second son of his sister Eleanor and John I of Castille.

Ferdinand I of Aragon and Sicily, an upright man and a good king, fully deserved the title of "The Just" bestowed on him by his subjects. Out of respect for the wishes of Martin I, he confirmed Bianca in the

regency of Sicily, where petty wars between noblemen disturbed the country. Two years after Ferdinand's accession, these rivalries died down, and Capua, Count of Modica, the cause of most of the trouble, was taken prisoner. The queen Regent now left Sicily and went to live at her father's Court at Navarre where she married John, Duke of Pignafel, second son of Ferdinand of Aragon. The Duke was sent to Sicily as Viceroy in 1416, and from that date the Island continued to be governed by Viceroys.

When King Ferdinand died in 1416, the Crowns of Aragon and Sicily passed to his son Alfonso I. The new king, incessantly at war with the Angevin Princes, the Genoese and the Pisans, was, in consequence, always short of money. Despite the repeated assurances of his predecessors that Malta should never be alienated from the lands of the Crown, in the year 1420, he feudalised the Islands in favour of Don Antonio Cardona who paid 30,000 florins for the privilege.

The Municipality of Malta entered strong protests, but the Jurats, though greatly incensed by such a breach of faith, were obliged to swear fealty to the new ruler and pay the taxes he chose to fix in his own



favour. In 1425, we hear of the Islands being in the hands of Don Consalvo Monroi, who reduced the populace to utter misery by his extortions.

The exactions of Monroi finally became unbearable and the people openly revolted against his regime, and laid their hands on the property and on the friends of the tyrant. The Council, alarmed by the situation, immediately sent ambassadors to the King and to the Viceroy submitting their case in detail, and praying that the King should again take Malta into the royal demesne, the Maltese being ready to pay back to Monroi the 30,000 florins he had given for the Islands.

The King gave the Maltese deputation a friendly reception, and on the 3rd January 1427, by a diploma dated at Palermo and signed by the two Viceroys, granted all the petitions of the Maltese, confirmed all the privileges granted to them by former Kings, and, calling Malta "*Membrum Insigne*" of his Kingdom, and the Maltese "*singularissimi zelatores et vassalli fidelissimi*", authorised them to resist "*de facto*" and "*manu forti*" any attempt against their civil freedom. As a compliment to the Sovereign, the capital of Malta was from this date referred to in official acts as

"Città Notabile," though the people continued to call it Mdina as before.

Though happy to be free from its petty tyrants, the people found it very hard to collect the promised 30,000 florins, their resources being reduced to the lowest ebb. The Islands had recently been invaded by Barbary Corsairs who carried off all they could lay hands on; the invasion was followed by an epidemic of plague which raged fiercely between 1427 and 1428. It was essential, however, that the 30,000 florins should be paid; the nobility and the land-owners subscribed large sums, while public collections were made by the Jurats and by priests deputed for the purpose by the Bishop. Eventually, the sum was paid, and the privileges announced by the Viceroys were confirmed by the King on the 20th June, 1428.

The internal administration of the Islands had, by this time, been fully developed, and Jurats responsible for the public revenue and for the good administration of the laws, were elected yearly by the Council, helped by a large number of officials.

Since the days of Martin I, the government of the Islands had been entrusted to a Municipality known as the *Università* (*Universitas Melitae et Gaudisii*). The first authori-

ty was the Popular Council, which though not a legislative body, had the right to submit to the Sovereign the needs of the community, to take action in all important public events, to regulate the supply and sale of foodstuffs, to nominate certain officials, to check abuses in the civil service, to impose certain taxes, and to institute public loans. The members of the Council were elected from among the nobility, the free citizens, the members of the various professions, the secular clergy, tradesmen and artisans; the electors were the heads of families, who recorded their votes by word of mouth.

The chief official was the "Capitano di Verga", or Captain of the Rod, so called because he had the right to be preceded by a rod bearer at public functions. He was called "Hakem" by the Maltese people, and administered justice, being at the same time head of the army. He was assisted by four Jurats, who were entrusted with the administration of the public expenditure, the buying of provisions, the regulation of the price of foodstuffs and the supervision of the weights and measures.

The King reserved to himself the appointment of the following officials; the Collector of Rents (Segreto), the Superintendent

of the Harbour (Portolano), the Chief Police Officer (Baglio), and the Officer in Charge of the Royal Falcons (Falconiere).

The island of Gozo was, later, granted a separate Università modelled on that of Malta.

Military service was compulsory, and the inhabitants were subject to a yearly contribution on behalf of the army. There was constantly in the Island a Spanish Garrison under the Governor of the Castello a Mare, (now Castel Sant'Angelo). The Maltese militia, to which every native between the ages of sixteen and sixty was bound to belong, was known as the *Deima* or standing army.

The force was divided into nine battalions, one for every parish, including that of Notabile, of from six to eight hundred men each. Two hundred of these militia men were obliged to keep horses, thus forming a corps of cavalry.

Malta received a second Royal visit in 1432, when King Alfonso I, landed on his way back from an expedition against the sovereign of Tunis, and honoured the noble family of Inguanez by residing in their house at Notabile. Alfonso I was the eldest son of Ferdinand King of Aragon and of Sicily.

Nine years later, the Island contributed sixty ounces of gold to the King's war fund, Alfonso himself having asked for the money *in viam gratiosæ subventionis*. Other sums the King obtained from Malta by the sale of land and the granting of noble fiefs, such as that of the Sakkaja to Baron Inguanez, and that of Marsa to Pietro del Bosco for two hundred golden ducats.

King Alfonso I of Sicily had been promised the crown of Naples by queen Giovanna II, he supported with his armies. When the queen died in 1435, the throne of Naples was occupied by Renato of Aujou. King Alfonso fought stubbornly for his rights, and in 1442, having conquered Renato, he became *de facto* king of Naples.

In 1442, therefore, the realm of Naples was united to that of Sicily the King assuming the title of Sovereign of the two Sicilies.

In 1458, Alfonso I died, and his brother John II, King of Navarre, succeeded to the Crown of Aragon and Sicily. The Kingdom of Naples passed into the hands of Ferrante, Alfonso's natural son.

After a reign of twenty one years, in which nothing of importance occurred in Malta, John II died, and was succeeded by

his son, Ferdinand II of Sicily and V of Spain, commonly known as "Ferdinand the Catholic"; this king was reigning in conjunction with his wife, Isabella of Castile, when Columbus sailed for the New World. (1492)

About this time, a Turkish fleet, cruising the Mediterranean in search of booty, attacked Malta, looted the villages nearest the shore, and carried off a number of the inhabitants as slaves. The University, greatly alarmed at this daring feat, brought to the King's notice the danger to which the Islands were exposed for lack of proper fortifications. Ferdinand sanctioned the construction of a fort at the mouth of the Grand Harbour, but we hear of no special grant being made from the Royal Treasury towards the cost of this work. In 1552, this fort was enlarged under the rule of the knights of St. John, and called San Telmo or Sant Elmo.

Ferdinand the Catholic died in 1516 after an eventful reign of thirty-seven years. Among his more famous deeds are the reconquest of Granada from the Moors, the expulsion of the Jews from his kingdom, and the institution of the Inquisition. Pope Alexander VI bestowed on him the title of "His



Catholic Majesty" in recognition of his help against the enemies of the Holy See.

Joanna, only daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, succeeded her father at his death. She had married the son of the Emperor Maximilian, Philip, the Archduke of Austria, at whose death her mind became unbalanced, so that her son Charles took over the management of State affairs.

On the death of Maximilian, in 1519, Charles became the head of the greatest military power in Europe, and reigned under the titles of Charles the First of Spain and Second of Sicily, and Charles V, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire.

The Maltese congratulated the new king on his accession, and asked to have their old privileges confirmed. This was done by a royal decree dated at Brussels, 8th September 1516, which made important grants and recommendations to the Viceroys, in whose hands, as usual, the administration of the Islands was left. At this time, the two great scourges of Malta were plague and the Barbary corsairs. In 1523, the town of Borgo, the commercial centre of the island, which had grown up under the shade of Castel Sant'Angelo, and rivalled the Città Notabile in importance, was decimated by plague.



The Governor of the Castel Sant Angelo had full jurisdiction over the population of the Borgo, barely tempered by the authority of the University of Notabile.

The town (Vittoriosa) is to this day called *Birgu* by the Maltese, and the name is probably derived from *Pirgos*, the specific name of all sea coast castles, common to all the Islands of the Greek Archipelago.

Plague greatly reduced the population, and in 1525, those who remained were alarmed by an invasion of corsairs, who landed at St. Paul's Bay and laid waste the country as far as Musta, carrying away about four hundred persons as slaves.

The inhabitants of the Mediterranean shores lived in constant dread of these pirates, and in Malta, from a number of look-out towers, spread all over the Island, watchers reported their approach. The corsairs knew no moderation, and on one expedition alone, eleven thousand people were captured between Naples and Reggio. Every nation in Europe and every rank in society were represented among the enslaved. In the long list, we find a Viceroy, two sons of Scottish peers, the great Spanish writer Cervantes, St. Vincent de Paul and many others eminent in science or arms.

The Sicilian government was not unmindful of the troubles of Malta. As a precaution against plague, infected ships were to keep away from the shores, while the Spanish garrison was increased so as to be able to check invasions of the Barbary corsairs.



## CHAPTER VII.

### **The Order of St. John of Jerusalem.**

In the year 1524, a rumour was current that under the auspices of Pope Clement VII, the Order of St. John of Jerusalem was negotiating a treaty to obtain possession of the Maltese Islands. The University greatly incensed at the news, held long and heated meetings in order to devise means of inducing the King to keep his promise not to alienate the Islands.

The Order of St. John had, by this time, achieved fame as the defender of Christianity against the Moslems, the standing menace of Europe. This Order was instituted in Jerusalem about A.D. 1085 as a community of Monks having under their charge a hospital for pilgrims who fell ill while visiting the Holy places. As the devotion of the Holy Sepulchre increased, the Christian Princes became more and more desirous of rescuing so precious a monument from the hands of the Infidel.

In 1096, a Crusade for the recovery of the Holy Places was preached in Europe, and an army set out for Jerusalem under the leadership of the French knight Godfrey de Bouillon. This army was ultimately victorious, and the Christian Princes agreed to enlarge and endow the Hospital of St. John which had done good service during the war. Special knights were created to defend the Hospital, and priests and nurses were appointed to minister to the wants of the patients. In 1113, Gerald, the chief of the Hospital, was made Master of the new Institution, to be known henceforward as the Order of the Hospital of St. John. He ruled piously for twenty years, and was succeeded by Raymond du Puy, who further developed the Order and compiled a code of laws for its use.

The Knights were divided into the following classes:—

- a) Military Knights, or Knights of Justice.
- b) Conventual Chaplains and Chaplains of Obedience.
- c) Serving Brothers at Arms.
- d) Magisterial Knights.
- e) Knights of Grace.

Before being admitted into the Order,

Military Knights, had to prove noble birth on both sides for four generations. They were first appointed as novices for one year and then joined the Convent for military service with the land forces or the galleys. A complete year of service was called a *carovan*. After three years of Carovan duty, the young Knight had to reside for at least two years in the Convent. He then became eligible for the higher posts and dignities of the Order including the Bailiwicks, Commanderies and Priorates.

The Conventual Chaplains were received into the Order without any restriction as to nobility of birth. They resided in the Auberge of their Language, and although not exempt from the carovans, they usually did duty in the Hospital and the Conventual Church. The Conventual Chaplains and the Chaplains of Obedience were all ecclesiastics, and could attain to the dignities of Prior of the Church and of Bishop.

The serving Brothers joined the Order without special restrictions and were entrusted with military duties.

The Brothers or Donats were people indirectly attached to the Order. They could be rewarded for their services by the bestowal of the demi-cross.

The Magisterial Knights and the Knights of Grace were honorary knights nominated by the Grand Master, and usually occupied some important post in connection with the Order.

The Sacro Consiglio, or Supreme Council was presided over by the Grand Master and consisted of the Bishop, the Prior of the Church, the Piliers, or Deans of the Languages, who could be represented by their lieutenants, the Priors, the Conventual Bailiffs, and the Knights Grand Cross. The Secretary of the Council was the Vice-Chancellor, who was assisted by two priests.

The Bishop was nominated by the Pope in the following manner. The names of three candidates were submitted by the Grand Master to the King of Sicily, who chose one of them for recommendation to the Pontiff. Next in dignity to the Bishop was the Prior of the Conventual Church, who was appointed by the Grand Master in Council and presided over ecclesiastical functions of the Order.

The Knights were separated into Languages or Nations according to the country of their origin. The Languages were as follows:—

- i. Provence, under the Grand Commander and the Treasurer of the Order.
- ii. Auvergne, under the Marshal or Commander-in-Chief of the Army.
- iii. France, under the Grand Hospitaller.
- iv. Italy, under the Admiral of the Order.
- v. Aragon, Catalonia and Navarre, under the Grand Conservator.
- vi. England, under the Turcopilier or Commander of Cavalry.
- vii. Germany, under the Grand Bailiff and Inspector of Fortifications.
- viii. Castile, Leon and Portugal (added in 1462) under the Great Chancellor.

Each Language had an Auberge, or Inn in which the Knights assembled and sometimes resided. At the head of each Auberge was the Pilier, or Bailiff, who had an allowance from the Treasury for the expenses of his office and the maintenance of the Knights in his Auberge. This allowance was not very large, but Bailiffs were usually rich, and were expected to keep the Auberge at a high standard.

Bailiffs were divided into three classes; the Conventual Bailiffs who were obliged to reside in the Convent, the Capitular Bailiffs who were allowed to live out of the Convent, but were obliged to attend the General



Chapters, and the Bailiffs “per favorem” or “ad honores”, who were chosen by the Grand Master under the sanction of a Bull of the Pope. These last, were usually the Generals of the Galleys, but the title did not carry with it the right to vacant dignities. It was the custom to have a certain number of honorary Bailiffs in each Language.

Sometimes as many as a hundred and fifty knights resided in an Auberge. The Commanders, however, who held benefices of two hundred pounds a year, the Chaplains, and the Serving Brothers, who received a hundred pounds a year, were considered to be sufficiently provided for, and had no right to a place at the table of the Auberge.

Nominations to Commanderies were made by the Grand Master in Council, and were supposed to be granted by seniority, though exceptions to this rule were numerous.

All legislative powers were vested in the Chapter General, but the executive power was in the hands of the Grand Master.

The election of the Grand Master took place in the Conventual Church on the third day after the occurrence of a vacancy. Each Language elected three members, who assembled to choose a committee of sixteen.

This committee, voting by secret ballot, chose the Grand Master.

The original title of the chief of the Order was "Master of the Hospital"; and only in the thirteenth century was it changed to "Grand Master of the Order."

A number of permanent commissions, presided over by high dignitaries, existed to help the Grand Master and the Supreme Council in the Government of the Convent. Of these, the more important were:—

- i. The Commission of the Treasury
- ii. The Prodomi, or Administrators of Justice.
- iii. The Receivers or Administrators of  
of the Revenue.
- iv. The Congregation of War.
- v. The Commission of the Galleys.
- vi. The Shipping Commission.
- vii. The Commissioners of the Poor.

In 1291, the Knights, driven from Palestine by the Infidels, migrated to Cyprus, and in 1310, after many vicissitudes, they established themselves in the Island of Rhodes, which they held for more than two hundred years.

Here they grew so powerful that they became a menace to the Ottaman Empire, and in 1522, during the Grand Mastershi

of Fra Philip Villiers de L' Isle-Adam, Suleiman I, having brought the siege of Belgrade to a successful issue, turned his attention to Rhodes.

Great preparations were made on both sides. A huge Turkish army was brought together and hurled against Rhodes, and the Moslems, who for long had been harassed and beaten by the Christian Knights, vented on them their pent-up hatred. The Siege lasted six months with heavy losses on both sides, but at last the Knights, reduced to a handful, with their fortifications in ruins, were obliged to yield. The gallant L'Isle-Adam surrendered to Suleiman, who was generous enough to allow the Knights to depart from Rhodes in their own galleys taking with them their personal property.

The Convent left Rhodes on the 1st January 1523, and sailed to Candia, where the fleet was repaired. They then proceeded to Messina, where they settled for some time to takê counsel and bring the scattered Knights together. Finally they repaired to the City of Viterbo in the province of Rome, where the Convent was established under the protection of the Pope, the spiritual chief of the Order.

Pope Clement VII promised the Grand

Master all possible help, and after much deliberation, it was agreed that Malta was probably the fittest home for the Order.

As soon as the proposal was made, the Grand Master appointed a committee of Knights, choosing one from each language. This commission visited Tripoli and Malta, and drew up an exhaustive report not very favourable to either place.

The Emperor Charles V was then approached, and the Pope's wish was finally realised. The Emperor was perfectly willing to cede Tripoli and Malta to the Knights, for by so doing, he obtained the good will of the new Pope and placed a buffer between his State and the Ottoman Empire, which was becoming a grave menace to his Mediterranean possessions.

The project, however, could not at once be realised. In fact, many years elapsed before the Order took formal possession of the Islands, and the Grand Master, meanwhile, travelled to Marseilles, Madrid and London trying to induce the Powers to help him to regain Rhodes. At this juncture, the Pope quarrelled with Charles V, and took the side of France in the war which was then in progress between Francis I and the Emperor. In 1527, the Imperial troops

sacked Rome, and peace was not concluded until August 1529.

On the 26th March of the following year, Charles signed the Charter which vested the Order of St. John of Jerusalem with the perpetual sovereignty of the Islands of Malta and Gozo and the city of Tripoli. The Order was bound not to make war on Sicily and to make an annual presentation of a falcon to the Viceroy in acknowledgement of his suzerainty. It was further agreed that the bishopric of Malta should be filled up by the Emperor from candidates submitted by the Grand Master.

The Maltese, who held a written promise from King Alfonso of Sicily that their islands should never be ceded to anybody under any circumstance, and who were even empowered to resist by force any such alienation, were not consulted in the matter, and did not fail to protest. The University sent Giacomo Inguanez and Antonio Cassar as ambassadors to the Emperor, but, in the meantime, the deputies of the Order sailed for Malta with full powers to take over the Islands. The Maltese informed the deputies of their action, and threatened to ignore the deed signed by the Emperor. As, however, it was clearly impossible that they

should stand up against the forces of the Empire they finally came to terms with the Order, hoping they would prove more enlightened and less high-handed than their former feudal lords; an expectation which often proved to be false.

The Council of the University asked the Deputies of the Order to approve a list of chapters guaranteeing the property of the Maltese and all the rights, privileges, uses and laws, they had obtained from the Sicilian King. The deputies swore on the Holy Scripture that the Chapters should be respected, in proof of which, they were solemnly registered by a notary; these preliminaries were arranged in June, but further business detained the Order in Sicily for another four months.

Finally, on the 26th October, 1530, the Grand Master and Knights arrived in Malta on the three galleys Santa Croce, San Filippo and San Giovanni. The Convent assembled at the Borgo and a thanksgiving Service was held in the church of San Lorenzo which was made the Conventual Church of the Order.

On the 13th November, L'Isle-Adam proceeded in solemn procession to Mdina, the capital of the Island, where he was received



by the Governor and the Jurats, and solemnly swore to uphold all the rights and privileges of the Maltese.

Most of the privileges, however, were speedily ignored, and in a short time they dwindled to vanishing point. Only two years after the arrival of the Order, we find that the Jurats had drawn up several petitions for the restitution of rights already disregarded.

A further disability under which the Maltese suffered was that they were disqualified from joining the Order as Knights, Malta not being considered as forming part of any of the established Languages. This prohibition, which remained in force to the last, extended even to foreigners born in Malta, so that it was the custom for foreign ladies of noble birth, resident in the Island, to go to Sicily when about to give birth to a child.

By the time the Knights came to Malta, the religious element in their foundation had fallen into decay. Their monastic vows were usually regarded as a mere form, and they were remarkable for their haughty bearing and wordly aspirations. The Maltese, on the other hand, grown accustomed to be treated as freemen, greatly resented the loss of the political liberties which had been accorded to



them by Alfonso. It is not, therefore, surprising that there was little love lost between the Maltese and their new rulers.



## CHAPTER VIII.

**Last year of L'Isle-Adam—Pietro di Ponte  
Didier de Sainte Jalle—Juan d'Omedes—  
Claude de la Sengle**

L'ISLE-ADAM'S LAST YEAR. 1533—1534

L'Isle-Adam's first thought was to improve the fortifications of Borgo, to repair the Castel Sant'Angelo, and to build houses for his Knights. The administration of the Island had hitherto been entrusted to the University, but the Grand Master now created a new magistracy for the eastern part of the Island, leaving the Jurats to deal with the western portion. His next act was to take over the administration of the customs and appropriate the revenue.

From the point of view of the Order, L'Isle Adam was a good administrator, and in his short reign over Malta, he organised the Convent and made regulations for the Islands. On the 5th September 1533, he

promulgated a body of laws, drawn up in Latin, under the name of *Statutes* and *Ordinances*.

In 1534, the last year of L'Isle-Adam's life, Henry VIII of England, who was already in conflict with the Pope, decreed the complete spoliation of the Language of England. Many of the English Knights remained loyal to their faith, and Dingley, Fortescue, and two others were ultimately beheaded for refusing to deny the supremacy of the Pope. Other Knights were imprisoned and many had to leave England stripped of all their possessions. Of these, some came to Malta where they lived at the expense of the Convent.

These were not the only troubles which clouded L'Isle-Adam's last days. Dissensions broke out among his Knights in Malta; a quarrel, followed by a duel, took place at Borgo and the death of one of the combatants was the signal for a free fight in which four other Knights were killed.

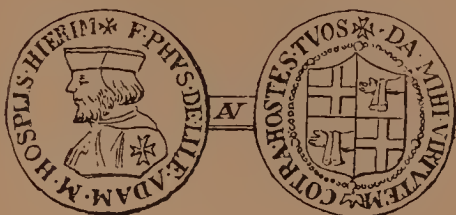
The Grand Master, now in his seventy-fifth year, fell ill of fever and died on the 26th August 1534, in the Convent of Santa

Maria di Gesù, at Rabat of Notabile. His heart was placed in an urn and buried in that church where a marble slab records the event. His body was laid in the vault under the Chapel of Fort Sant Angelo, which he had enlarged, and there, on one of the walls, a marble slab, bearing his effigy and a long Latin inscription, was placed.

The arms of L'Isle-Adam were an extended right arm vested with ermine in a blue field, with a maniple of the same, pendant in a gold field.

The sovereign privilege of striking money in Malta was disputed by the Viceroy of Sicily and it is, therefore, difficult to establish whether or not the coins and medals of L'Isle-Adam and the two succeeding Grand Masters were struck in Malta. Of L'Isle-Adam's coins we have a gold zecchino of the Venetian type, representing St. John in the act of presenting a banner to the kneeling Grand Master, with the legend "F. Philippus", and on the reverse a figure of the Saviour surrounded by stars in an oval of pellets and the legend: SIT. T. XPE. DAT. REGIS. ISTE. DU. (May this royal ducat be dedicated to Thee, O Christ.) Of this *zecchino*, five varieties are

known. There is also a silver one *tari* piece, and two small copper pieces which may not have been coins at all.



### PIETRO DI PONTE (DU PONT) 1534-5

Fra Pietro di Ponte, an Italian Knight of noble family of Asti in Piedmont, then resident in his Priorate in Calabria, was elected to the Grandmastership after the death of L'Isle-Adam. He accepted the honour with great reluctance, and did not come to Malta until three months after his election.

At this time, the great corsair Barbarossa had just captured Tunis and was threatening Tripoli, then under the care of the Order. A great Christian Army was soon assembled, headed by the Emperor Charles V. himself. The Order sent its whole fleet, consisting of the Gran Carracca, three galleys, and eighteen small ships with 2,000 men on board. A fierce battle was fought in which the

Knights bore themselves gallantly, and Barbarossa was defeated with the loss of 90 galleys.

We read that great rejoicing took place in Malta in 1535, presumably to celebrate this event. The victory, however, was not decisive, for in 1540, Barbarossa gained, at Prevesa, the victory that gave the Turks the supremacy of the sea until the day of Lepanto.

Di Ponte died after a short illness, on the 18th November 1535, at the age of seventy-one, and was buried in the vault of St. Angelo by the side of his gallant predecessor.

His arms were a red St. Andrew's cross in a silver field. The only known coin of this Grand Master is a *zecchino* of the same type as that of L'Isle-Adam.

#### DIDIER DE SAINTE JALLE. 1536

A French Knight, Fra Didier de Sainte Jalle the Prior of Toulouse, was elected to succeed Di Ponte. The new Grand Master was at Montpellier at the time, so a lieutenant, Fra Jaques Pellequin, was appointed to fill the office. He sent an expedition to Tripoli, whence the Maltese galleys returned victorious and laden with spoil.

De Sainte Jalle never came to Malta, but died at Montpellier eight months after his election. His arms were a silver goose on a golden field. No coins of his have been found.

### JUAN D'OMEDES 1536-53

The General Chapter meeting on the 20th October 1536, elected as their chief Fra Juan d'Omedes, an Aragonese Knight, Bailiff of Capse, a man of strong character, who had fought bravely for the Order and had lost an eye in the great siege of Rhodes.

The new Grand Master, who was then living in Spain, did not hasten to assume office, but delayed his arrival until fifteen months after his election.

In 1551, the Sultan Suleiman planned to deal Charles V. a crushing blow, and prepared the way by attempting to seize the Maltese Islands and get rid of the Knights of St. John. A fleet of ninety galleys and fifty galiots, commanded by the corsair Dragut, left the Bosphorus with ten thousand men on board, of whom three thousand five hundred were Janissaries, and appeared before Malta on the 18th July, 1551.

The Grand Master was not prepared



to meet so overwhelming a force, but lost no time in disposing his small army to the best advantage. Mount Sceberras, the promontory on which Valletta is now built, was then a bare hill. Here was posted a detachment of knights and arquebusiers, under the Spanish Knight De Guimeran, and Borgo was placed in charge of the English Knight Upton.

Some of the Turkish galleys entered boldly the Grand Harbour but a number of well-directed volleys from Mount Sceberras brought them to a stand, and compelled them eventually to withdraw. The fleet then anchored in St. Paul's Bay. Six French Knights were sent to reinforce Notabile, in which the panic-stricken country people had taken refuge with their belongings.

The Turks were not prepared to undertake a siege, for they knew that Admiral Doria was cruising to the south of Italy with a Spanish fleet. They, therefore, turned their attention to Gozo, which they knew to be weakly garrisoned. A portion of the fleet anchored at Mgiar, the Commander of the castle was summoned to surrender, and a broadside was fired to back the request. The Knight in charge who was not prepared to face a fight against such odds, asked that

the inhabitants should not be molested, a vain request for the castle was pillaged along with all the farms and the neighbouring villages, and six thousand of the inhabitants were carried away into slavery.

A marble tablet at the corner of the Cathedral Church of the Gran Castello marks the place where Bernardo, a soldier of the Order, fell sword in hand, after killing his wife and two daughters to prevent their falling into the hands of the Turks.

In the following year rumours of another Turkish invasion were brought to the Convent and it was agreed that, as a measure of precaution, women, children and old people who could not be housed within the walls in time of need, should be sent to Sicily. This was duly carried out, but how long the refugees stayed away we do not know.

The Turkish expedition was a reality, for Tripoli was attacked and taken after a short struggle in which the garrison of the Order was overpowered. The Convent was not altogether sorry to lose Tripoli, for they had always felt that their small and divided forces were unequal to holding it against the powerful arms of the Sultan. The Turkish victory, however, made it more probable that Malta would be the next point

of attack, and preparations were made for an adequate defence. In 1552, the old fort at the mouth of the Grand Harbour was enlarged and called Sant Elmo while a new fort, San Michele, was built on the Isola Point, then known as Monte San Giuliano or Monte del Mulino. The bastions of Borgo were strengthened and reinforced, foreign troops were engaged, and foodstuffs and munitions were collected and stored.

The dreaded attack did not take place after all, and the Knights, feeling themselves strong, resolved on a bold move, by fitting out an expedition to attack the Barbary States. A fleet of sixteen vessels was despatched to destroy the town of Zara and the Island of Gerba, but the attempt failed, and the fleet had to return after burying many Christian soldiers in the sands of Barbary.

Amid so much disappointment and anxiety came the good news from England that Queen Mary had reinstated the Catholic Faith in her Kingdom. Ambassadors were sent to Malta to negotiate the revival of the English Language and the restitution of the property of the Knights, but the death of Mary and the accession of Elizabeth put an end to these hopes, and the Language of England was never re-instated.

D'Omedes died on the 6th September 1553, at the age of eighty, and was buried in the vault of Castel Sant Angelo. He left a body of laws entitled *Pandectae et Ordinationes* regulating the fees of the various Courts. He was probably the first Grand Master to strike coins in Malta, and of his coinage we have a gold *zecchino*, silver pieces of four, two and one *tari*, and a silver *carlino*, but no copper coins. A bronze medal, fifty millimetres in diameter, shows the Grand Master with magisterial cap and official robes.

The medal has no reverse and must be a mint proof. The arms of D'Omedes were three towers in a red field, joined to a golden field with a green pine tree.



## LA SENGLÉ 1553-57

A French Knight was next elected to the Grand Mastership, Fra Claude de La Sengle, Grand Hospitaller of the Order and Ambassador at the Court of Pope Julius III.

The new Grand Master turned his whole attention to the fortifications of the harbour, and caused an elaborate and powerful bastion to be built at Isola Point within which a new city began to rise. This city, known as Senglea to commemorate the Grand Master, was built on a regular plan, land being sold for building purposes at a nominal price. To ensure the speedy cutting of the ditches it was ordered that the building stone should be taken from them. The inhabitants of the neighbouring villages were forced to help in the works, a number of gangs working alternately on a system then known as the "Neuba."

The fleet was increased, and placed under the command of the Knight La Vallette, who soon became famous for his prowess against the corsairs.

In 1555, the Island was visited by a hurricane which damaged houses and sunk

ships in the harbour. Four galleys of the Order were dismantled and six hundred men perished. The loss of the fleet was a great blow, for the Treasury was not in a state to replace it. Philip II of Spain presented the Order with two galleys, the Grand Master had another one built at Messina at his own expense, and the Pope sent a number of slaves to man the new ships. The Prior of St. Giles gave a galleon, complete with crew and munition, and the Grand Prior of France offered his services to the Order with two armed galleys. All these armaments were much needed, as the Turkish fleet was constantly reported in various parts of the Mediterranean, and was daily expected to appear before Malta. The presence of the Knights did not restrain the corsairs from attacking the Islands for the sake of booty. Important piratical incursions are recorded in the years 1547, 1551, 1554, 1560 and 1563. On these occasions, the pirates landed and pillaged villages as far inland as Zurrigo, Zeitun and Siggieui, and carried away rich booty and numerous prisoners.

De La Sengle's reign, though prosperous, was short. He died on the 17th August 1557, and his heart was deposited in the church of the Carmelities at Notabile, while his body

was laid with those of his predecessors, in the vault of St. Angelo.

The arms of this Grand Master were five silver scallop shells in a black St. Andrew's cross on a gold field. No gold coins of his are known, but he struck silver pieces of four and two *tari*, and a small copper coin known as *picciolo* or *diniere*. He also struck a silver medal forty-eight millimetres in diameter with his own bust and his coat-of-arms on the reverse.





## CHAPTER IX

### **Grandmaster Jean De La Vallette—The Great Siege—The City of Valletta. 1557 - 1568**

The Conclave met on the 21st August 1557, and the popular French Knight, Fra Jean Parisot De Vallette, Prior of St. Giles, known as Monsieur Parisot and La Valette was elected Grand Master.

The Convent rejoiced, but the Sultan Suleiman, convinced that the new Grand Master would not give him peace, resolved to deal the Christian Princes a hard blow before they could equip themselves for the struggle.

A Turkish army left the East in 1558, and invested Sicily with some success. The Order then made ready to receive the enemy, but the Turks directed their fleet to Marseilles.

Charles V died in 1558, and Philip II, his successor, came to terms with Henry of France. This news made the Order rejoice, for the enmity of the two Christian Empires

was a scandal and gave great advantage to the common enemy the Turks.

☞ The Knights of Jerusalem had, by this time, become as famous for their maritime skill as they had before been renowned for their boldness on land. All the prowess of the Knights was, of course, at the expense of the Turkish ships. A naval victory, gained in the Adriatic, brought the anger of the Sultan to such a point that he decided there and then to send against Malta a great expedition which had been prepared at Constantinople. A Turkish galleon belonging to the chief Eunuch of the Imperial Seraglio was taken by the Knights Giou and Romegas. The galleon was a rich one and shipped a valuable cargo. The Sultan regarded this as personal insult and both his female favourites and the Imams of his mosque asked for vengeance.

The mighty armament was soon ready and entrusted to the Pashas Mustafa and Piali, helped by the celebrated corsair Dragut, whose naval renown was well established in the Mediterranean. La Vallette was kept informed of all these movements and prepared as best as he could to defend the Island. The powers of Europe were advised of the coming campaign and were asked for help,

but of all the Christian Princes, the Pope alone sent 10,000 crowns and the Emperor Philip a small body of troops. The other States either refused to help or declared themselves unable to contribute to the defence of Malta.]

The Order had then to fall back on its own resources. All the Knights who were abroad were summoned to the Convent, stipendiary troops were enrolled, and a great number of Maltese were pressed to join the service. [A general muster showed the presence of 600 Knights and servants-at-arms, and about 8,500 soldiers.] The Italian Knights were the most numerous, numbering not less than 164, the Aragonese came next with 85, the Castilians with 68, the Provençals with 61, the French with 57, the Auvergnats with 25, the Germans with 13, and the English with only one Knight, Oliver Starkey, the Latin Secretary of La Vallette.

The fortifications of Senglea were strengthened, the ditches of Borgo were completed, a battery was constructed at the foot of Fort St. Angelo and the entrance to the creek between Senglea and St. Angelo was blocked by an iron chain, behind which the galleys were moored for safety. The garrison of Notabile was reinforced and the country

people were directed to retire into Notabile at first sight of the enemy, carrying with them their goods and their animals. All possible precautions were taken and the Knights set themselves to drill the recruits and to devise means of strengthening the works of defence.

The Grand Master knew that the Turks would, as a first step, occupy the plain of the Marsa, where there were important springs of fresh water, not far from the shore. Water was scarce in the Island, and all the ships and the dwellers around the shores of the Grand Harbour depended on the Marsa springs for their supply. The Borgo, where the Convent resided, and the forts of St. Angelo and San Michele had no supply of running water, but relied on the Marsa springs and on the cisterns under the houses and in the public squares. The Marsa, therefore, was a most important strategic point, but La Vallette had no means of holding it against a great army; he was therefore very perplexed as to how to prevent the Moslems from using the valuable water supply. The chief Court physician proposed fouling the water in such a way as to render it useless and even dangerous to the enemy. A special concoction of hemp, wheat, arsenic, and other

ingredients was prepared and added freely to the water in the Marsa wells and the large reservoirs at Kala San Giorgio, at Kala San Tomaso, and all other large tanks to the South of the Grand Harbour. We find that this inconvenienced the enemy for a few days only, but the Marsa supply continued to be used by the Turks during the whole time of the siege.

On the 18th May 1565, the first sails of the enemy appeared, and, by the evening, the sea was covered with ships, which by degrees concentrated to the south-east. The Turkish fleet consisted of 153 war vessels with a large squadron of transports for munitions and supplies for an army of 30,000 men. Early in the morning, the troops disembarked in the south-eastern bays of Marsascirocco and San Tumas. The guns of St. Angelo and of St. Elmo at once fired a signal of alarm and everybody in Malta retired behind the ramparts awaiting the onslaught of the enemy.

Skirmishes soon took place between the scouting parties of the Turks and some cavalry of the garrison, but the Grand Master, who could not afford to meet the enemy in the open field, forbade the garrison to leave the ramparts. In two days, the Turks

had reached the villages of Zeitun and Zabbar, carrying away all they could find in the fields and in the houses. The tents of the outposts were quite visible from the bastions, and as they daily extended towards the north, everybody understood that the siege had begun in grim earnest.

The Turks, extending their lines, encamped at Tarxien, at the Marsa, on the fields around Senglea and on the Corradino heights. Moving across the Marsa to the North they had, by the 31st March, occupied the peninsula to the north of the Grand Harbour on which the city of Valletta is now built, with the idea of harassing the Knights at Borgo and Castel Sant Angelo, and of becoming masters of the entrance to the Marsamuscetto and the Grand harbours. As fort St. Elmo, however, hindered their advance, they decided to demolish it as soon as possible.

{ The Turks did not lack men for such an enterprise for, besides the great army that arrived with the fleet, they had been receiving reinforcements; in fact, a further contingent of 1,500 men, under the command of Dragut himself, joined the army on the 30th of May.



# TURKISH SIEGE 1565



M. Weston



As a further precaution against any possible attack from a fleet, a strong battery was mounted on Sliema point, to the north of St. Elmo. When all preparations were made, the attack on Fort St. Elmo began with all the fury of a first effort. For days and weeks guns, culverins, and basilisks fired incessantly on the fort, of which the outer works were soon reduced to dust and the ditches filled with debris. The garrison was thinned and exhausted by the continuous fighting, for the attackers daily reached the outer works and fired on the besieged, burnt their palisades and tried to enter the fort through the gaps made by the shells of the big guns. For some time, reinforcements were sent to Sant Elmo by night from Borgo but, when the enemy advanced far enough, the command of the harbour was complete and no boats were allowed to cross either by day or by night.

For five weeks, the heroic garrison stood the onslaught of the Turks who, enraged at such a resistance, exposed themselves freely during the attack in order to reach the few soldiers behind the breast works. The losses of the Moslems were great but they were easily replaced, while the Christians were few in number, exhausted, by fatigue and wounds, and short of ammunition.

On the 23rd June, the fort was taken by a great general assault. Not one of the garrison was found alive and Mustafa, who was eager to take prisoners, was so incensed, that he beheaded all the dead Knights he found and, tying their bodies to planks, sent them floating in the Grand Harbour so that they could be seen by their friends on the opposite shore. Eight thousand Turks lost their lives before Sant Elmo. Dragut himself, on whom the Sultan's hopes were centered, fell on the day of the general attack struck by a stone canon ball. The Christians lost 1,500 men of whom 100 were Knights.

The Turkish fleet was now free to enter Marsamuscetto harbour, and a squadron detached from the main fleet was moored within it by Misida and Pietà. Fort Saint Elmo was dismantled, and its guns despatched to Constantinople as a proof of the Turkish victory.

The Viceroy of Sicily, who had been asked for reinforcements, sent, on the 29th of June, a small detachment, under the Spanish Knight Don Melchior de Robles. Forty-two Knight accompanied this relief party which landed safely to the north east of the Island, and was able, after some time, to join the forces of La Vallette at Borgo.

The Turks now turned their attention to Borgo and Senglea which they hoped to take by a general assault by land and sea.

The batteries of Saint Angelo made it impossible for any of the enemy's big ships to enter the Grand Harbour, but they could not prevent the concentration of a fleet of smaller vessels on the shores of the Marsa. A number of these vessels were actually dragged across the land between the Pietà creek and the Marsa, and, on the day of the general attack, to the astonishment of the besieged, a fleet of armed boats appeared at the foot of the bastions in the Grand Harbour, of which the entrance had been jealously guarded.

The first general attack was delivered on the 15th July. The Turks had to fall back at the end of the day, after a loss of 3,000 of their best troops, but the besieged were badly shaken and their fortifications seriously damaged at more than one point. Both parties hastened to make good the losses they had sustained. The next general attack was delivered on the 2nd August with such overwhelming force that, by the middle of the day, all the outworks were taken and the main forts were seriously threatened. At this point, to the great astonishment of

all, the retreat was sounded and the enemy turned back at the moment when another effort would have brought them complete victory. This sudden retreat was caused by a cavalry attack delivered on the camp of the Marsa by a commandant of Notabile. The small detachment of troops, left to defend the camp, fled at the unexpected onslaught and the panic-stricken Moslems spread the news that a great army had come over from Sicily and was advancing against them. The commanders who knew that reinforcements were daily expected from Sicily, ordered a change of front to face the advancing enemy. When the first detachment arrived at the Marsa the blunder was discovered; as, however, it was too late in the day to regain the lost positions, the retreat was allowed to continue.

Other attacks took place on the 23rd August and on the 1st September, but the Turkish troops had lost their dash and the handful of Christians behind the ramparts were fighting with desperate vigour. Even the women and children helped on the walls, handing out arms and stones. La Vallette was always with his troops and had a good word for all, but in his heart he could have had no hope of victory, for his men were

decreasing every day and the walls were nowhere strong enough to prevent an escalade. Messengers were repeatedly sent to the Viceroy of Sicily asking for troops, but in spite of promises no relief came.

Don Garcia di Toledo, the Viceroy of Sicily, had, by the middle of June, a hundred galleys ready to sail to Malta, but, being informed that the Turks had about two hundred vessels there, he thought it too risky to cross over with troops. He therefore asked for time and for more men. The Pope sent six hundred men to Messina under Pompeo Colonna to be despatched to Malta without delay. After some debate with the various commanders, 1,200 men were embarked on three galleys which arrived safely at Gozo. Informed of the arrival of this small force, the Grand Master ordered the galleys back to Sicily and wrote a strong letter to the Viceroy demonstrating the futility of sending such small contingents when the enemy was growing bolder every day.

The king of Spain now pressed the Viceroy to start at once, with all available troops, to the relief of Malta. Don Garcia, however, preferring to wait for more galleys so that he might fall on the Turks with an overwhelming force, and take to himself the

honour of having saved Malta and the Order, continued to devise new methods of justifying his delay. Both Emperor and Pope grew indignant and again urged the Viceroy to start at once. In spite of this pressure it was not until the 25th August that Don Garcia ordered the fleet to move.

A force of eighteen hundred troops was gathered at Syracuse, which, together with six thousand seven hundred Italians, were embarked on fifty-eight galleys under the command of Alvaro de Sande; the rest of his force the Viceroy intended to take over himself at a later date. The fleet was close to Malta on the 4th September, but either through some misunderstanding, or through timidity, the expedition returned to Sicily without accomplishing anything.

☞ The besieged, in the meantime, were reduced to a sorry plight. The walls were heaps of stone, hastily patched up at night and battered again during the day by the fire of the enemy. At every assault the ranks of the defenders were thinned and their stubbornness shaken. Food, water and ammunition became scarce. The scorching August sun, followed by the damp, enervating winds of September, made prolonged exertion a torture. ☞



The enemy was aware of all this, and the crafty Mustafa began to rely more on the lamentable straits of the Christians than on his famous Janissaries.

The 7th September witnessed a great change in both camps. Early in the day the Grand Master received the welcome tidings that about 8,300 men had disembarked at Melleha Bay and were on the way to Notabile. It was soon clear that the news had been spread in the Turkish camp for the trenches were steadily being evacuated.

The Knights and the people were so overjoyed, that they never thought of harassing the enemy. The church bells pealed out and drowned the cries of the crowds gathered in every open space.

Mustafa, believing that at least 20,000 men had arrived, ordered a general retreat to the ships. Part of the troops embarked hastily at Marsamuscetto and the rest were directed towards St. Paul's Bay. On the way, they set fire to Casal Attard, but did not spread towards Notabile, for they were harassed by the troops sent out to watch their movements. The relieving army, however, did not think of falling upon the retreating masses, and the Moslems, left to themselves, had time to embark both men and material.



On the 13th, they sailed out in good order in a south-easterly direction. On the 15th, the Viceroy arrived at Malta with 48 galleys conveying the remainder of the relieving army and was greatly disturbed to hear that there were no more enemies to fight. La Vallette took the Viceroy round the walls to show him to what condition they had been reduced and how narrow had been the margin of their safety. Don Garcia congratulated the Grand Master on his noble defence, but the next day he left the Island much disappointed at the poor result of so many months of anxiety and at the cold reception he had received from the Knights of St. John. His Catholic Majesty showed clearly his displeasure at the behaviour of Don Garcia who, later on, lost his governorship of Sicily.

[The losses of the Christians during the siege amounted to some 9,000 men, of whom 3,000 were Knights and men-at-arms. The Turks are said to have lost about 20,000 men.]

The Borgo, which had borne the brunt of the fierce struggle, was now officially named "Citta Vittoriosa", a name it bears to this day.

The 8th of September was henceforth observed by the Order as one of their

anniversaries and a requiem was sung every year in the Conventual Church for the repose of the souls of those who fell during the siege. Though with less pomp, the anniversary is celebrated to this day.

The Princes of Christian Europe lavished praises on the heroic Grand Master, Philip of Spain presented him with a sword of honour and a rich poniard, and the Pope offered him a Cardinal's hat, which he refused.

The great struggle was now over, but not the anxiety of the Grand Master who, knowing that the Turks would not accept their defeat so easily, looked with dismay at the state of the Treasury, the army, and the fortifications. The population of the Islands was likewise reduced to utter misery, houses had to be rebuilt, fields restored to their former state and farms re-stocked with cattle.

At the first meeting of the Council of State the majority of the Knights were in favour of abandoning the Islands and of seeking a more favourable abode. La Vallette, however, who had grown to love Malta as much as L'Isle-Adam had loved Rhodes, made it clear to all that as long as he lived he would never abandon the Islands for which so many noble lives had been lost.

The fortifications of Borgo and Senglea had not proved to be as strong as was hoped, and experts were of opinion that as long as Mount Sceberras remained a possible camping ground for the enemy, the fortifications on the other side of the harbour were of little use. It had been always the dream of La Vallette to construct, on the Sceberras plateau, a magnificently strong city that could defy all the forces of his enemies and become a beautiful abode for the Order, and now, encouraged by the advice of experts, he put his hand to the project. The death of Suleiman, in 1566, eased to some extent the Grand Master's mind by removing the immediate danger of an expedition to avenge the defeated Mustafa.

The Grand Master knew well that the Order was not in a state to incur the expense of building a new city and he tried to enlist the sympathy of the Cristian Princes, who still had every interest in raising a strong bulwark against Moslem invasion.

Some years before, he had opened his mind to the Pope on this subject. Pius IV. approved of the scheme and appointed the famous engineer and architect, Francesco Laparelli to draw up the necessary plans. Laparelli, who was, at the time, in the ser-

vice of the Duke Cosimo Dei Medici, came to Malta for the first time in 1565. Later on, with the help of the engineers of the Order, Girolamo Cassar and Genga, Lapa-relli prepared a plan on parchment and made a wax model of the proposed city, both of which were forwarded to the King of Spain, the Suzerain of the Islands.

The King sent to Malta the Knight Scabelloni, Prior of Hungary, an expert in military architecture, and after a lengthy discussion and numerous alterations of the original plan, a final scheme was submitted and approved.

Pius IV died three months after the raising of the great siege, but Pius V, his successor, showed himself keenly interested in the project, and promised to help the Grand Master in every possible way. The preparation of the plans was easy enough; a greater problem was to obtain the necessary funds. Through the good offices of Pius V, the King of Spain sent La Valette 20,000 scudi worth of foodstuffs and building material and, later on, 80,000 lire. Charles IX of France gave 40,000 francs; King Sebastian of Portugal 30,000 cruzados. The Order obtained a loan of 50,000 scudi from

Palermo and soon the work began in good earnest.

For all their promises of help and of encouragement, the contribution of the Christian Princes came to barely £10,000, a large sum for that time, but inadequate for so great a purpose. The Order had therefore to strain their own resources and to persuade the inhabitants of the Island to support their cause. All the members of the Order came forward gallantly, and the Maltese, though sorely tried by the long siege, submitted willingly to increased taxation. At a meeting of the Consiglio Popolare, on the 21st September 1567, it was decreed that a duty of six tari (ten pence) per salma of imported wheat be levied, and one grano (a) on every quartuccio of retailed wine, the receipts to go towards the building of the new City.

As silver was scarce at the time, brass coins of nominal value were issued for the occasion. These coins known as "black money" or "patacche" were very unpopular but greatly helped the Governmet. Their value varied from one to four tari; they were large and thin, with the arms of the Grand Master on one side and, on the other,

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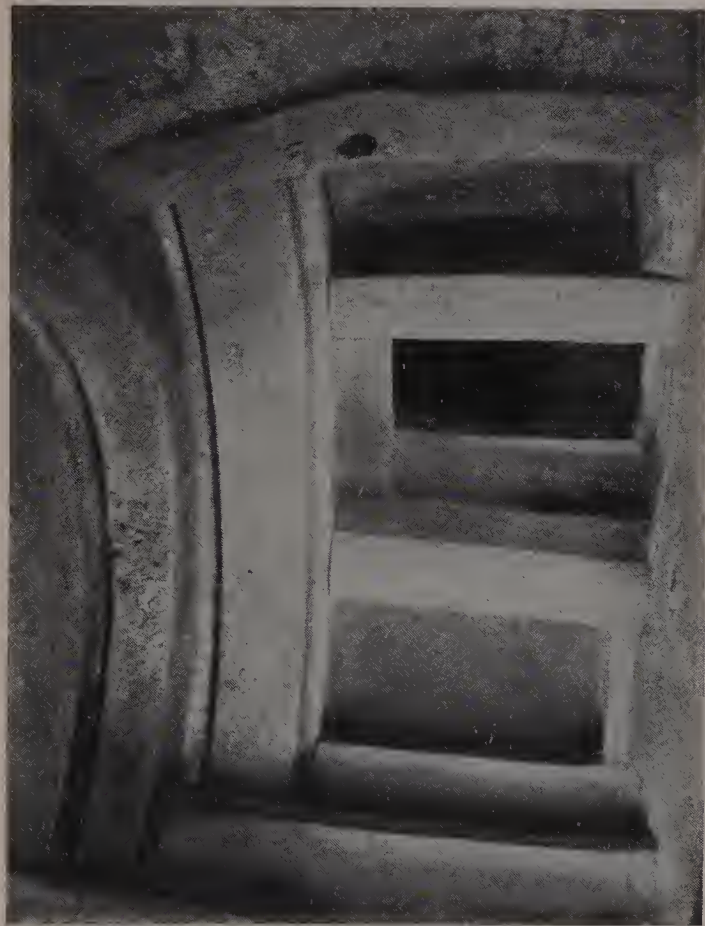
(a) 1 Salma = 8 Bushels, 1 Quartuccio = 1 quart, 1 Grano =  $\frac{1}{12}$ d

two hands clasped in friendly union, with the motto *non aes sed fides* (not money but credit), the value of the coin being shown in figures. The Island was soon flooded with these coins, as thousands were used weekly to pay the army of labourers engaged in the new works.

The site chosen for the construction of the new city was the tongue of land which from the Marsa valley extends to form the Grand Harbour on the south and the Marsamuscetto Harbour on the north. This strip of land was known to the Maltese as *Xaghriet Mewwiia* and its extreme point as *Scebb-ir-ras*. The meaning of these names is not very clear but the best interpretation of *Xaghriet Mewwiia* seems to be "the inhabited plain" and of *Scebb-ir-ras* "the light of the point". *Xaghriet Mewwiia* implies that the plateau was inhabited in early days and "light of the point" suggests that a beacon was kept burning by the first inhabitants on the extreme point of the land to guide ships into the harbour. The modern *Scebb-ir-ras* would therefore be St. Elmo lighthouse used for the same purpose.

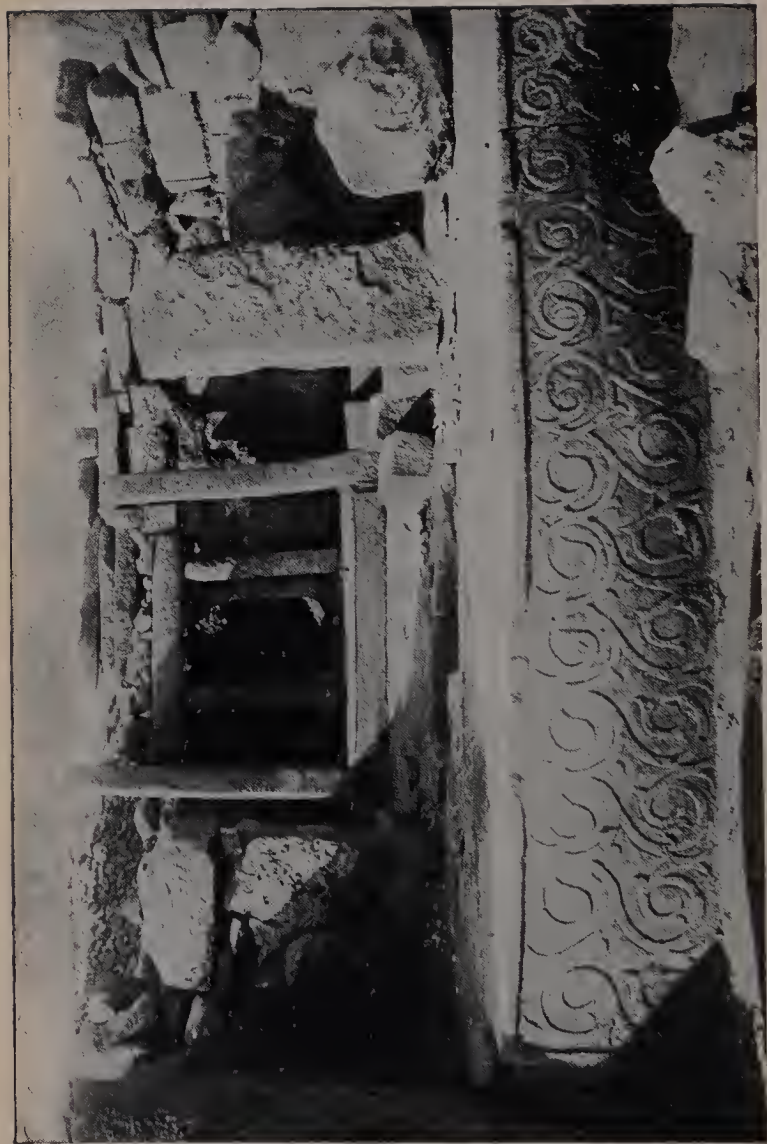
An old Maltese saying is that: *F'Xaghriet Mewwiia ghad cull xiber iiswa miia*





The Holy of Holies in the Hal-Safienî Hypogeum





Decorated block in one of the Tarxien megalithic temples-

which means "A time will come when at Xaghriet Mewwiia every span of ground will be worth a hundred", a prediction that came to be true as we all know.

In constructing the new City, it was the intention of the engineers, as shown on their detailed plan, to cut down the rocky plateau of the *Scebb-ir-ras* to a level platform. The effort proved, however, to be beyond the means of the Order, when time was a great consideration. Rumours of a Turkish expedition having reached the Grand Master, he directed that the fortifications should be immediately taken in hand. The levelling, which was progressing on the central part of the plateau, was stopped and a rough dressing was all that could be attempted so that the buildings of Valletta came to be constructed on the natural slopes of the hill.

As the Grand Master was impatient to lay the foundation stone of the City, the fortifications were marked simply by trenches and rubble walls, which showed the outlines of the fortress, and the ceremony was performed with great pomp on the 28th March 1566. The rocky ground was crowded with people from the early hours of the morning. An ample pavilion was erected,

under which an altar was placed, and all knights, fully equipped, and headed by their chief, attended the High Mass sung by the Prior of the Order, and heard with reverence the long sermon preached by Father Spirito Pelo Angosciola, an Austin Friar.

Amidst great rejoicings and firing of petards and guns, the Prior blessed the Stone, and the Chief of the Order placed a number of coins and medals under it.

On one side of the block a Latin inscription was cut as follows:

FR JOHANNES DE VALLETTA  
 SACRAE DOMUS HOSP. HIEROSOL. M. MAGISTER  
 PERICULORUM ANNO SUPERIORE  
 A SUIS MILITIBUS, POPULOQUE MELITAE  
 IN OBSIDIONE TURCICA PERPESSORUM  
 MEMOR,  
 DE CONDENDA URBE NOVA  
 EAQUE MOENIIS, ARCIBUS, ET PROPUGNACULIS  
 AD SUSTINENDAM VIM OMNEM,  
 PROPULSANDOSQ. INIMICI TURCAE IMPETUS,  
 AUT SALTEM REPRIMENDOS, MUNIENDA,  
 INITO CUM PROCERIBUS CONCILIO,  
 DIE JOVIS XXVIII MARTII MDLXVI.  
 DEUM OMNIPOTENTEM,  
 DEIPARAMQ. VIRGINEM, ET NUMEN TUTELARE  
 D. JOHANNEM BAPTISTAM,  
 DIVOSQUE CETEROS MULTA PRECATUS,

UT FAUSTUM, FELIXQUE REL. CHRISTIANÆ FIERET,  
 AC ORDINI SUO, QUOD INCOEPTABAT,  
 BENE CEDERET,  
 PRIMA URBIS FUNDAMENTA,  
 IN MONTE AB INCOLIS SCEBERRAS VOCATO, JECIT,  
 EAMQUE DE SUO NOMINE VALLETTAM,  
 DATO PRO INSIGNIBUS  
 IN PARMA MINIATA AURATO LEONE,  
 APPELLARI VOLUIT.

“Brother John de La Vallette, Grand  
 “Master of the Order of the Hospital of Je-  
 “rusalem, mindful of the danger to which,  
 “a year before, his Knights and the Maltese  
 “people were exposed during the siege by  
 “the Turks, having consulted the Heads of  
 “the Order about the construction of a new  
 “city and the fortification of the same, by  
 “walls, ramparts and towers, sufficient to  
 “resist any attack and to repel, or, at least,  
 “to keep away the Turkish enemy; on Thurs-  
 “day the 28th March 1566, after the invo-  
 “cation of Almighty God, of the Virgin Moth-  
 “er of God, of the Patron Saint John the  
 “Baptist and of the other Saints, to grant  
 “that the work commenced should lead to the  
 “prosperity and the happiness of the whole  
 “Christian Community and to the advantage  
 “of the Order, laid the foundation stone of the  
 “City on the hill called Sceberras by the

"inhabitants, and, having granted for the arms  
"of the City a golden lion on a red shield, he  
"wished it to be called by his name, Valletta".

This inscription was copied on a marble tablet, sixty-eight years later, by the Grand Master de Paule (1634) and placed on the outside of the main gate of Valletta, the Porta Reale, then called Porta San Giorgio. When the Order left Malta, the inscription was removed, but it was replaced in 1853 when the Gate was rebuilt in its present form under the Governorship of Sir William Reid.

The Council of the Order, by a decree given on the 14th February 1566, enacted that the new City should be known by the name of the Grand Master La Vallette, and at the same time, to show that the Order was not proud of the projected display of strength, they added to the name the qualifying term *Humillissima*, the most humble.

From this date, the *Scebb-ir-ras* hill was, for a number of years, the scene of the greatest activity, thousands of hands being engaged in digging, building, and transporting material.

Besides the raising of high bastions and the cutting of deep moats, another gigantic work was undertaken for strategic purposes.

The engineers suggested that it was unwise to leave close to the new City loose earth and stones, which would afford material for the construction of breast-works and trenches by an enterprising enemy. The Order therefore bought all the fields between Valletta and the plain of the Marsa and removed the soil down to the bare rock. Considerable expense was thus incurred which was met, in part, by the proceeds of the sale of building sites inside the walls, *two tari* per square canna, i. e. about fourpence for five square yards.

Anxious to watch the growth of the city he had planned, the Grand Master spent long hours on the *Scebb-ir-ras* inspecting the works and encouraging the workmen. The first building to be erected was the small Church dedicated to "Our Lady of the Victory" in which the Grand Master used to pray and rest from his long wearisome inspections.

La Vallette died after a short illness on the 21st August, 1568, and his body was carried, with great pomp, from the Borgo to the Marsamuscetto harbour, whence it was conveyed to the lonely chapel of the Victory on the wind-swept *Scebb-ir-ras*.

It is related that the Admiral's galley,



stripped of its masts and cannon, carried the hero's remains. The two galleys which towed the funeral barge were hung with black cloth, and several Turkish Standards trailed behind them in the water. After these, came two other galleys crowded with dignitaries of the Order.

Thus La Vallette was the first to inhabit the City he had planned and to which he had given his name.

La Vallette was, undoubtedly, the most remarkable Grand Master who ever ruled the Order. His heroic defence of Malta and the tenacity he showed in building his new city testify to the great power of mind which had already attracted the attention of the Order when as a simple knight he led his galleys against the Moslems. Whatever his military virtues, however, as a ruler of the Maltese he was harsh and uncompromising, his arbitrary methods being remarkable even in an age when all governments were absolute. He further reduced the rights of the University of Notabile and forced upon it an annual contribution of 600 scudi in favour of the Treasury of the Order. The people resented this spoliation, and a number of citizens decided to address an appeal to the King of Spain to induce the Order to respect



the pledges solemnly taken on their coming to the Island. La Vallette cut short the correspondence with the suzerain by having the leaders of the protesting party hanged in a public square. La Vallette hated ostentation and in one of his "Bandi" of 1558, he forbade the use of embroidered stockings under penalty of four years slavery in the galleys.

The coinage of La Vallette is abundant, but its quality testifies to the strenuous times in which it was struck. The *Zecchino* is the only gold coin of this Grand Master, and is of the usual Venetian type with the legend: *Da mihi virtutem contra hostes tuos*. The silver coins run from the *six tari* piece to the *cinquina*. The *tari* piece has the coat of arms of La Vallette and on the obverse the legend: *Parate viam Domini*, round the figure of the Baptist. The four *tari* piece has the head of the Baptist in a dish with the legend *Propter veritatem et justiciam*. Besides the arms of the Grand Master, the three *tari* piece has the eight pointed cross with the legend *Sub hoc signo militamus*. The two *tari* piece has the same devices as the four *tari*. The one *tari* piece shows the Paschal Lamb with banner and the legend: *Ecce qui tollit peccata*. The *carlino* has the legend: *S. Johannes Baptista ora pro nobis*,

round the arms of the Order. The *cinquina* is similar to the *carlino*.

The copper coinage varies from the four *tari* piece to the *diniere*. This four *tari* and the two *tari* pieces had the character of tokens. On the obverse they have the eight pointed cross with the legend : *Sub hoc signo militamus* and on the reverse the motto *Non aes sed fides*, round the device of two clasped hands.

The medals struck by La Vallette are six in number, one of silver and five of bronze. One of them shows the plan of the new City and two others a map of the Island. Specimens of most of these were deposited under the foundation stone of Valletta. Appropriate legends appear on these medals such as *Turca Fugator*, and *Melita liberata*. One of the medals represents David in the act of killing Goliath.

The arms of La Vallette were a silver falcon and a golden lion on a red field.



## CHAPTER X.

### **Pietro del Monte—La Cassière Loubenx Verdalle—Martino Garzes Alof de Wignacourt.**

PIETRO DEL MONTE, 1568-1572

On the death of La Vallette, Fra Pietro del Monte, Grand Prior of Capua, was elected Grand Master. Under his wise and strong rule the work begun by La Vallette was carried on without interruption.

The bastions round the city were completed first; the streets and squares were to be laid out afterwards. When the work had reached this point, del Monte discovered that some of the Knights were trying to hinder the growth of the new City, and by spreading alarms of an impending Turkish invasion were endeavouring to induce the Convent to fix their permanent abode at the Borgo. The Grand Master had therefore to resort to his supreme authority to bring back

the Knights to their sense of duty. To defeat all opposition, he issued orders that the Convent should be transferred to the new city on the 18th March, 1571. Although there was no proper accommodation for all, the Knights had to pack up their property and move to the new quarters. On the appointed day, the Convent with all due pomp left Borgo and moved within the new fortifications where the dwellings were unfinished houses and wooden shanties, sheltered by planks and tarpaulins. The Grand Master himself occupied a house of three rooms divided by wooden planks and protected by a rubble wall. After this move there were no more delays and houses were speedily built.

In the original plan, the City was to have two gates, one the Porta San Giorgio, afterwards called Porta Reale, looking landwards, and the other opening on to the Marsamuscetto Harbour. A third gate was, however, opened on the southern side looking towards the Grand Harbour, and was named "Porta del Monte". On it a marble slab was placed with the following inscription, composed by the Knight Oliver Starkey, English Secretary of La Vallette:-

"Porta haec de Monte, viam quae de  
Monte subintrat,

Pietro De Monte Principe structa fuit.”

(This gate Del Monte, which from the mount leads to the way below, was constructed by the Prince Pietro del Monte.)

A Committee, or special tribunal of Knights called *Officio delle Case*, had been formed in 1562 to frame regulations concerning the new buildings and to arbitrate in disputes which might arise in connection with them. The first dispute arose out of the question of the division of the city into two parts, the *Collacchio*, reserved for the dwellings of the Knights and the Churches, Hospitals, etc. and the *Fuori Collacchio*, in which the people were to be allowed to reside. The Knights, being ecclesiastics, were supposed to lead a claustral life, and their seclusion had been as strictly maintained at the Borgo, as previously in Rhodes. This proposed division of Valletta was very unpopular among the people and the young knights, so that few came forward to buy land. The opposition finally became so acute that the proposed division had to be abandoned.

The principal restrictions imposed on the owners of building sites were:- that the streets should in no way be encumbered; that no gardens or open spaces were to be allowed

in front of the houses; that the street corners of houses should be ornamented with carvings, statues, etc., and that every house should have a cistern dug in the rock, and be provided with a foul drain. Every one who had bought land was bound to start building within ten months, and before one year elapsed, he must have built as much of the house as would allow one person to live in it. The building had to be completed within three years. All the stone required for building purposes had to be quarried from the site of the proposed *Manderaggio* and of the proposed arsenal at the back of St. Elmo.

The *Manderaggio* is, and has always been, a prominent feature of Valletta. The word *Manderaggio*, or *Mandracchio*, was in common use in southern Europe, in the sixteenth century, to designate a creek intended for the shelter of small ships, as a pen (mandra) might shelter a flock of sheep. As no creeks existed on the Marsamuscetto side of the City, it was decided to have an artificial one, and in order to save the expense of cutting the rock down to below sea level, the Order proposed to have the stone removed by allowing the site to be used as a quarry. A good start was made in this direction, but when a certain depth was

reached, the stone was found to be unfit for building purposes. Quarrying came to an end, and a gaping wide pit was left very difficult to fill up. This chasm remained neglected for many years, but when the scramble for building space began, small houses were built round it and at the bottom, making the place a maze of tortuous streets composed of small dingy dwellings, into which the poor flocked, attracted by cheap rents.

The Grand Master intended to construct his Palace on the site where the Auberge de Castile now stands, but, in the meantime, he occupied a house in the centre of the city which his nephew, the Knight Eustachio del Monte, had built for himself. He liked this residence so well that he kept improving it and finally made it the Magisterial Palace which, subsequently, was used by all Grand Masters.

The great Arsenal, to be built on the north-west side of St. Elmo, in the small creek known as Jews' Sally Port, could not be completed owing to the poor quality of the stone met with below a certain depth.

The defence of Valletta was entrusted to the different Languages. The bastions to the west of the town, overlooking the country, were under the care of the Languages of



France, Provence and Auvergne; France having in charge the extreme left, from the Upper Barracca to Main Gate; Provence the centre, from the Main Gate to St. Michael's bastion, and Auvergne the extreme right, including the whole of St. Michael's bastion. The Italian Language guarded the site around the Upper Barracca; Castile, the Grand Harbour side of the City, from the Upper to the Lower Barracca; Aragon the Marsamuscetto side, from St. Michael's to St. Andrew's bastion. The Anglo-Bavarian Language had the defence of the St. Lazarus bastion from the Lower Barracca to St. Elmo, and the tract from St. Elmo to Marsamuscetto Gate, was under the care of the German Language. Fort St. Elmo was garrisoned by Knights taken from all the Languages.

By the time the City neared its completion, the Treasury of the Order had been strained to the utmost, and the people were on the verge of famine. Of the four galleys of the Order, three had been captured by the Turks near Sicily, and the ships had to be replaced without loss of time. A loan of 25,000 scudi was raised in Naples, the Order mortgaging all its property and, as an extreme measure, the Council, to obtain funds,

decreed the cutting down of the forest of the Priorate of Auvergne.

As soon as the fortifications were ready, guns were hastily mounted. Thirty cannon were bought at Palermo, the Duke of Florence sent twelve pieces of artillery, and the Duke of Savoy gave a long gun, known as the *Serpentino*, weighing 70 cantara (about 170 cwts.)

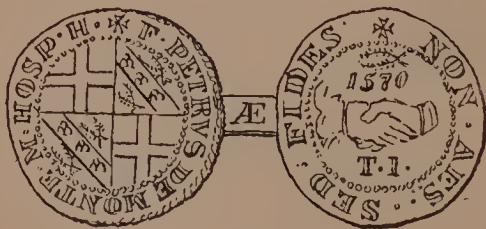
As the Turks had become once more very active, a Confederation of Christian Princes was formed, and in 1571, a mighty armament, consisting of 210 galleys, 28 large transports and 6 large ships, carrying heavy guns, under the command of Don Juan of Austria, met in the Mediterranean. The Pope's galleys were commanded by Marcantonio Colonna, those of the Venetian by Giovanni Venieri, and the three Maltese galleys by the knight Pietro Giustiniani. Ali Pasha had supreme command of a great Ottoman fleet consisting of 200 galleys and 70 frigates and brigantines. This mighty fleet, assembled in the gulf of Corinth or Lepanto, was pounced upon by the Christians on the 7th October 1571. A long and bloody fight ensued, in which the Christians came out victorious in the end, capturing 140 galleys and liberating 20,000 Christians from slavery. The Turks

lost their general, 5,000 officers and 30,000 men; the Christians, 14 captains of galleys and 7,600 men. The three galleys of the Order returned to Malta with two ships, allotted to them as their share of the prize taken from the enemy.

Del Monte died on the 27th January 1572, after ruling the Order for three years and two months, and was buried in the Church of our Lady of the Victory by the side of his predecessor.

The arms of Del Monte were three red mountains in a band, between two golden olive wreaths on a blue field.

No medals of this Grandmaster are known, but his coins are numerous and varied. He struck the usual gold *zecchino*, and the silver pieces of four, three, two and one *tari*, the *carlino* and the *cinquina*. His copper coins are the four and two *tari* pieces, of the same type as the La Vallette tokens, the one *tari*, and the *picciolo* or *diniere*, of which as many as six varieties are known.



## LA CASSIÈRE 1572-1582

On the death of Del Monte, the Order elected for their chief the Marshal of the Language of Auvergne, Fra Jean l'Evesque De La Cassière, the gallant standard bearer in the attack on Zara in 1552.

The personal merit of this Knight had been tested on many a battlefield and his reputation was high, both in the Convent and in the Courts of Europe, but in the Office of Grandmaster he proved a failure. He was too stern and obstinate to rule an Order made up of so many Languages, and soon became involved in lengthy disputes with the various authorities both within and without the Convent.

His first recorded dispute was with the Bishop, Monsignor Gargallo, on the question of ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Rome was appealed to, and the Pope appointed an accredited member of the Holy Inquisition to investigate the matter. This high official fixed his abode permanently in Malta, and, in time, secured such an ascendancy that on many occasions the government of the Order was threatened with subversion. A special tribunal was constituted and patents of independence

were issued to the Maltese, who were thus, practically, absolved from their allegiance to the Grandmaster.

The Bishop, meanwhile, assumed such independence of jurisdiction as to claim that the bestowal of the tonsure freed the wearer from subjection to the tribunals of the Order.

The existence of three powerful and independent authorities in the Island caused great confusion, and increased the unrest which was beginning to be felt in all classes of the community. Great indignation was once shown by a section of the people when the Grandmaster expelled from the Island the Jews, who were the principal money lenders of the place, and a certain class of women from Valletta.

Amidst all these internal and external troubles, the Grandmaster pushed on the building of Valletta. The Knights were, first and foremost Hospitallers, and it was natural that the new city should have a hospital worthy of the Order. The "*Sacra Infermeria*", as it was called, was built to the southwest of St. Elmo, a fine building, for a long time the best of its kind in Europe. This was under the care of the Language of France, of which the chief was called the "Grand Hospitaller." Under him were four

physicians, three surgeons, two practitioners, a conventual priest and ten chaplains. The Hospital could accommodate 745 patients, and meals were served in silver plate. The basement of the building was reserved for the treatment of patients of the lower classes. Attached to the infirmary, was a foundling hospital under the care of nuns.

The Conventual Church of St. John, one of the finest monuments of Valletta, was built by La Cassière at his own expense. Its foundations were laid in 1573, and under the direction of the Maltese architect Gero-lamo Cassar, the building was completed in 1577. It was solemnly blessed on the 20th February 1578 by the Archbishop of Mon-reale, Mons. Ludovico de Torres. The large balcony above the main entrance was intended for the announcement to the people of the result of the election of the Grand-master, which took place in the Church. Other churches were built in the time of La Cassière, including that of S. Barbara, in Sda. Reale; that of S. Caterina D'Italia, built by the Language of Italy, the church and convent of Santa Maria di Gesu, in Sda. S. Giovanni, and the church of S. Maria Damascena in Sda. Vescovo, erected

at the expense of Giovanni Calamia, a nobleman from Rhodes.

The Auberge de Provence, the residence of the Grand Commander of the Order, was built between the year 1571 and 1575, and at the same time, the Auberge D'Auvergne was built for the Marshal of the Order, who was the Pilier of that Language. The Auberge d'Aragon was constructed for the Spanish Knights, whose chief was the "Draper" or "Great Conservator" of the Order.

All this zeal in beautifying the city did not make La Cassière popular with the Knights. The Castilians openly rebelled against him for having bestowed the Grand Priory of Castile on an Austrian Archduke, and were only brought to reason by Papal authority.

A severe punishment, meted out to a number of Portuguese knights who had murdered one of their comrades, and a few strong disciplinary measures enforced on some young Knights who were growing turbulent and lax in their moral habits, caused great discontent in Convent. The Spanish Knights solemnly swore to get rid of the French Grandmaster, and a regular conspiracy was organised, headed by Fra Maturin De l'Escut, known as "Romegas." The Court of Spain appears to have been



informed of the plot, for three Sicilian galleys made their appearance in Malta at the most opportune moment.

The rebels called upon the Grandmaster and asked him to appoint a Lieutenant to take over the Government of the Order until he should clear himself of the charges made against him. He was accused of undue partiality to members of his own Language, neglect of the defences of the Islands, incapacity, immorality, and treasonable correspondence with the common enemy. The Grandmaster refused to submit to this high-handed treatment, but the knights insisted, and appointing Romegas as Lieutenant of the Government, carried La Cassière to Fort St. Angelo on the pretext that his person was in danger.

These grave facts were laid before the Pope by three ambassadors on the part of the rebels, and four on the part of the Grandmaster. The Pontiff sent the Prelate Gaspare Visconti to Malta as his Nuncio who, on his arrival, called at once a meeting of the Great Council to which he read two Papal briefs calling upon the Grandmaster and the Knight Romegas to proceed at once to Rome.

Both obeyed the summons. La Cassière proceeded to Rome accompanied by 300

Knights and their attendants. They were all lodged by Cardinal Louis D'Este and treated in a princely manner.

The Pope received the Grand Master with all the honours due to his high rank.

Romegas was coldly received and asked to await orders; he had not to wait long, however, as he fell ill in a short time and died. In due time, his partisans were directed to make public submission to the Grand Master.

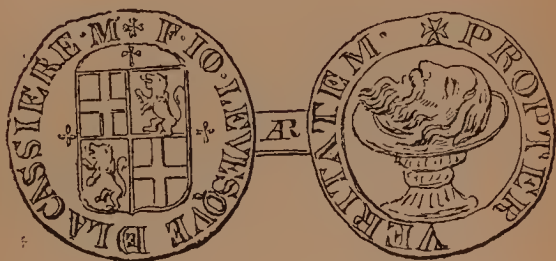
La Cassière was on the point of returning to Malta, to resume his place at the head of the Order, when he was taken ill and after three months of residence in Rome, on the 23rd December, 1581, he passed away surrounded by his faithful knights.

His body, conveyed to Malta, was laid in the Conventual Church he had built and destined to be the resting place of the Chiefs of the Order. His heart was deposited in the Church of St. Louis in Rome and covered by a marble slab with the following inscription:-

FRATRI JOHANNI EPISCOPO. MAGNO MILITIAE HIEROSOLYMITANAE MAGISTRO, VIRO FORTISSIMO, RELIGIOSISSIMO, SPLENDIDISSIMO, CUJUS UT IGNE AVRUM, SIC CALUMNIIS SPEC-TATA AC PROBATA INTEGRITAS, ETIAM ENITUIT SACRA SODALITAS MILITUM HIEROSOLYMITA-

NARUM PATRIAE, PRINCIPI OPTIMO MOERENS  
POSUIT. VIXIT ANNOS 78, OBIT ROMAE XII  
KALEND. JANUARI 1581.

The arms of La Cassière were a red lion rampant on a silver field. He struck one silver and one copper medal to commemorate his election. His coins are few and consist of the usual gold *zecchino* and the silver pieces of four, three, two and one *tari*, the *Carlino* and the *Cinquina*. Of copper coins, we only know the small *diniere*.



## LOUBENX VERDALLE 1582-1595.

On the death of La Cassière, wishing to secure the election of a chief capable of pacifying the Order, the Pope forwarded to Malta a brief in which three names were mentioned, and out of these the chapter had to nominate their Chief. At the election, which took place on the 12th January 1582, the French Knight Fra Hugues de Loubenx Verdalle, known as Verdala, a great favourite of the Court of Rome, was chosen as Grandmaster.

The Pope ratified the election and sent to the Order a brief authorising the incorporation with the dignity of Grandmastership of that of *Turcopolier*, formerly attached to the Language of England.

The Spanish and the Portuguese Knights were enraged at the result of the election, for they greatly desired to have one of their own nationality at the head of the Order. For this reason the new Grandmaster, although of a gentle and peaceful character and impartial in his dealings, failed to secure the confidence of all the Knights.

To prevent the repetition of a daring

raid attempted by a Turkish fleet in the previous year, Verdala constructed at his own expense a fort at Gozo. For his summer residence he built a palace to the southwest of Notabile, on a hill overlooking a fertile valley which he caused to be thickly planted with trees. Olive and orange groves covered the valley, and small forests of oak-trees, carobs, pine-trees and cypress spread up to the hill side. The *Boschetto*, as this place was called, was stocked with deer to supply the Grandmaster's table with venison and his friends with sport.

Verdala had to watch not only the Turks, but the Venetians as well, for they were at this time friends of the Sultan. In 1583 the Venetians went so far as to capture two galleys of the Order which had been chasing some Turkish vessels, and the fleet of the Order, as a reprisal, brought to Malta a Venetian galley found cruising near the Island.

The Convent, meanwhile, was full of sedition, and the discontent of the Knights was continually being brought to the notice of Rome. Pope Sixtus V, who in 1584 had succeeded Gregory XIII, was a personal friend of Verdala and wished to see the

Chief of the Order duly respected by his knights. He therefore sent for the Grand-master in 1587, and accorded him a royal reception. With a view, moreover, to enhancing his dignity, he created him a cardinal. For a time, the Pope's action had the desired effect, and on his return to Malta, Verdala was given a warm welcome.

It was at this time that Giacomo Bosio was asked to continue the official history of the Order already begun by the Commendatore Gio Antonio Fossan.

During this period, the Fathers of the Society of Jesus established themselves in the Island and founded a school for young gentlemen and for those who aspired to Holy Orders.

A severe epidemic of plague, which broke out in 1591, is said to have carried off no fewer than 6000 persons. Great rejoicing took place when the epidemic was over and on the 16th August, the feast of St. Roque, a solemn thanksgiving was sung. This was followed by a horse-race which has been repeated annually up to the present time.

The last years of Verdala's reign were years of unrest among the Knights and of

great poverty among the people. A Turkish invasion was feared, and the necessary war-like preparations exhausted the treasury and brought the necessities of life to abnormal prices.

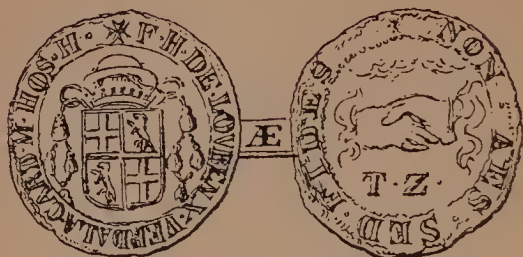
The Grandmaster was once more denounced to the Holy See as an incapable chief, and the new Pope, Clement VIII, called him to Rome. He came back to Malta in poor health, and died on the 4th May 1595, leaving to the Convent the considerable sum of 500,000 scudi.

Verdala's coat-of-arms shows a golden wolf on a red field. Seven medals were struck by the Grandmaster, the largest golden one, 52 mm. in diameter and 112 gms. in weight, being issued in 1587 to commemorate his reception of the Cardinal's hat.

The coins of Verdala are numerous, and consist of the golden *zecchino*, the silver four and two *tari* pieces, the *carlino*, *cinquina* and *half a cinquina* pieces, and copper four *tari* and two *tari*, the *carlino*, *cinquina*, *grano*, *tre-piccioli*, and one *picciolo* pieces. The numerous coins of a low denomination indicate the miserable financial conditions of the time, and bear witness to the thrifty habits the Maltese were forced



to cultivate, during the thirteen years of Verdala's rule.



## MARTINO GARZES 1595-1601

The French Knights' had succeeded in keeping the dignity of the Grandmastership in their own Language for a number of years, but neither the Convent nor the people seem to have benefited by it. Spanish rulers had, on the whole, proved more beneficial to the Order; as to the Maltese themselves, they were able to obtain supplies from Sicily with greater facility when the Spaniards were in power.

On the 8th May 1595, the Chapter elected for their Chief the Aragonese Knight, Fra Martino Garzes, the Castellano of Emposta. His election pleased everybody in Malta. Without favouring any party, he did his best to give the Order the peace it greatly needed.

Philip II of Spain was easily induced by Garzes to send supplies from Sicily; and the population, greatly distressed by the scarcity of provisions, was much relieved and elated.

Valletta was, by this time, growing rapidly at the expense of the inhabitants of Notabile. The Jurats, alarmed at the depopulation of the old city, asked the Grand-

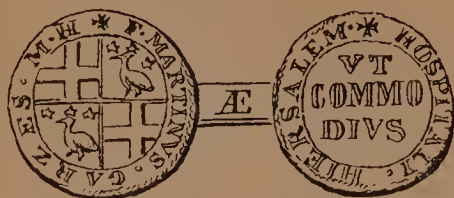
master to intervene in their favour and, accordingly, the inhabitants of Notabile were granted the privileges of being tried in their own courts, of being exempted from military service, and of not being liable to prosecution for debt for a period of six years. These measures seem to have somewhat checked the emigration from the old capital.

The Jurats of Notabile complained also that their fortifications were crumbling down. As the Order had not the means to undertake extensive repairs it was finally agreed that the Università of Notabile should levy a special tax for the purpose. This was done, and the rebuilding of the bastions was taken in hand in 1600 and completed in 1616.

The defence of Gozo had also to be attended to, and the Grandmaster, not to burden the public treasury further, left one-third of his personal property exclusively for the erection of a tower at Mgjar. The fort known as "San Martin" was built five years after the Grandmaster's death, which took place on the 7th February 1601.

The arms of Garzes were a silver heron under three stars on a blue field. The only known medal of this Grandmaster is a bronze one discovered at Gozo when the

Garzes tower was demolished, a fact which suggests that the medal was struck to commemorate the building of that tower. The following coins were struck by Garzes:- the golden *zecchino*, of which six varieties are known; the silver four, three, and two, *tari* pieces, the copper *grano*, the *tre piccioli* and the *diniere*.



## ALOFIUS DE WIGNACOURT 1601 1622

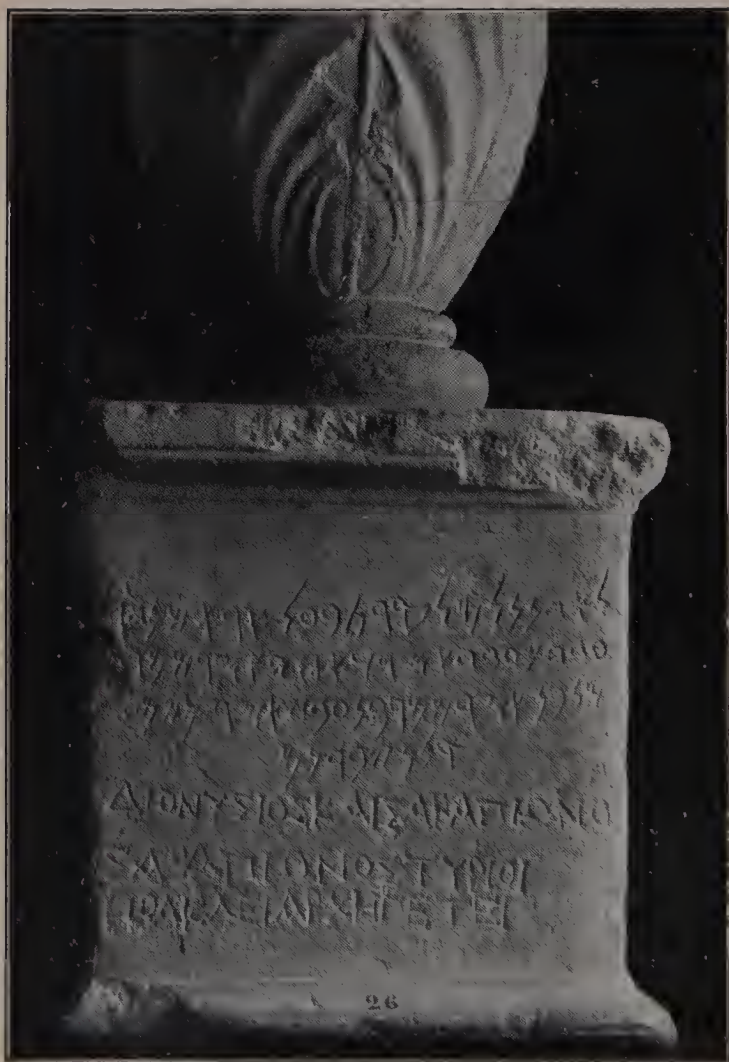
On the 10th February 1601, Fra Alofius de Wignacourt, the French Grand Hospitaller, was elected Grandmaster of the Order. The scion of a powerful family of Picardy and a Knight renowned for his uprightness and his military valour, Alofius was the very man needed by the Order to ensure peace and discipline. The people were greatly in need of provisions and the Knights lacked military training and a proper soldierly occupation.

Wignacourt opened negotiations with Philip III to obtain wheat from Sicily free of duty, and when this had been granted, turned his mind to planning military expeditions against the neighbouring Turkish coasts. By this time the Holy Wars of the Crusaders had degenerated into petty piratical expeditions of the Christian galleys against Mahomedan towns and villages.

Less than a year after the election of Wignacourt, the galleys of the Order gallantly attacked and carried the town of Mahometa in Barbary, and assaults were made on Patras and Lepanto, on the coast of Greece. Two years later, a predatory expedition was



Hajar Kim—View of the Eastern wall.



Phoenician inscription followed by a Greek text.



sent to the Islands of Langò, whence the galleys returned with a great booty and 165 slaves. In 1610, the fortress of Laiazzo, on the Cilician coast, was attacked and plundered and Corinth was sacked in the next year.

These successful expeditions elated the Knights, filled the Treasury of the Order, and greatly pleased the Maltese who got their fair share of the prizes. The Turks were enraged at this unexpected revival of the old spirit of the Knights, and in 1615, a fleet of sixty galleys appeared off Malta and landed 5,000 troops at Marsascirocco Bay. A general retreat within the fortified towns was ordered, and the cavalry was sent to harass the enemy who had dispersed in the villages in search of loot. The Infidels were not prepared for a long campaign, so they took what booty they could scrape together and hastily re-embarked on their ships.

Other battles were fought against the Turks in co-operation with the forces of the Catholic League, but not always with success.

Many quarrels cropped up at this time among the Knights on questions of right and precedence. When Charles De Brie, a natural son of Henry, Duke of Lorraine, was admitted into the Language of Germany

through influences foreign to the Order, the German Knights rose in a body and tore down the arms of the Grandmaster from the gate of their Auberge, leaving only those of the Emperor. Quarrels with the Bishop and with the Inquisitor were also frequent, and in 1619, Cagliares, the Bishop, left for Rome to lay his grievances at the feet of Clement VIII. During his absence, his Vicar was openly attacked by the Knights and imprisoned. The Pope, informed of this new outrage, threatened the Grandmaster with the anathema of the Church, and both the Grandmaster and the Council had to make full apologies to the Bishop for the rash act of the Knights.

These internal troubles did not hinder the Grandmaster in his efforts to protect the coast with fortifications, for towers were erected at the mouth of Marsascirocco harbour, a favourite landing place of the Infidels. Fort San Tomaso at Marsascala, and Fort San Lucian at Marsascirocco are important works of defence, constructed at the time, which stand to this day. The islet of Comino was protected by a tower, and so was the bay of Marsalforn, in Gozo. Vittorio Cassar, son of the great Gerolamo, was the architect who planned and erected all these fortifications.

Alofius de Wignacourt became popular

in Malta chiefly in connection with the water supply. The idea of furnishing Valletta with an aqueduct had already occurred to Garzes, but the expense involved deterred the Chapter from sanctioning it at the time. Wignacourt brought the proposal once more before the Council, and by a decree of the 9th January 1610, it was resolved that the City of Valletta should be supplied with running water. To provide the necessary funds, the Council allotted the proceeds of the sale of wheat in the granaries and in the bakeries of the Order, a sum which could not amount to more than 40,000 scudi (£3,000). The Grandmaster, foreseeing that this would not be sufficient, offered to make good any deficiency out of his private purse.

The services of a well-known Jesuit father from Messina, Padre Natale Tomasucci, who was reputed the best engineer for water works of his time, were secured for the purpose. He was instructed to collect water from the natural springs at the foot of the hilly ground to the north of Casal Dingli, and to conduct it to Valletta by means of galleries and stone channels.

Galleries were cut in the rock to the north of Casal Dingli and to the west of Notabile at Diar Handul, Hof-

riet ir-Rizz, Ghajn Cirani, Ghajn Teuzin, and the water was conducted in stone channels through Fiddien, Ghariexem and Bukana, to Casal Attard. From this point, stone channels laid on the ground became useless, as the ground dips abruptly about fifty feet. After many vain trials, the engineer who directed the works left the Island in despair. The engineer Bontadino dei Bontadini, from Bologna, was called to finish the aqueduct. Following the advice of the Maltese foreman he constructed an archway running down to Hamrun, and in due time the water reached Valletta.

A great fountain was constructed in the Palace Square, and on the 21st April 1615, the water was turned on in the presence of the Grandmaster, the Convent and the Clergy, amidst the rejoicings of the people, among whom coins were freely distributed.

The population at the time of Alofius de Wignacourt had grown to 41,054 persons of whom 38,429 lived in Malta and 2,655 in Gozo.

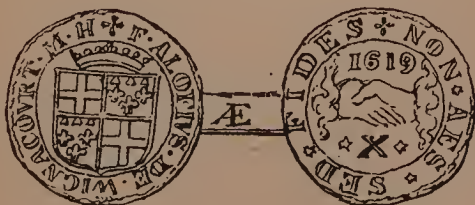
On the 16th July 1620, the Emperor Ferdinand II conferred on the Grandmaster the dignity of a Prince of the Empire and the title of "Serene Highness". This title was adopted by all subsequent Grandmasters with the exception of Paula who assumed

the title of "Eminence" granted to him by the Pope.

Wignacourt died on the 14th September 1622 at the age of seventy-five, bequeathing to the Convent £17,000, besides 200 slaves and 4,000 salme of wheat.

The arms of the Wignacourts are three silver fleur-de-lis on a red field. Two medals are known of this Grandmaster, one of silver bearing the date 1602, and one of bronze dated 1601. There are varieties of both medals with different dates, and of the first one, leaden proofs are known.

The coins of Alof. De Wignacourt consist of the usual gold *zecchino*, the silver four, three, and two *tari*, the *carlino*, *cinquina*, and *half-cinquina* pieces. Of the copper coins, there are the one *tari*, one *carlino*, one *grano*, three *piccioli* and the small *diniere* pieces. The Grandmaster was personally very rich, but the great variety and abundance of copper coins denote the poverty of the population at this time.



## CHAPTER XI.

**Mendez de Vasconcellos — Antoine de Paul-  
le — Jean Paul Lascaris Castellar — Martino  
de Redin — Annet de Clermont de Chattes  
Gessan — Raphael Cotoner.**

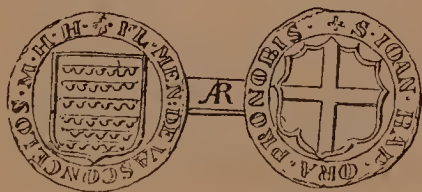
LUIZ MENDEZ DE VASCONCELLOS 1622-1623

The Chapter assembled in the Conventual Church on the 17th September 1622, and elected for their Chief the Portuguese Knight Fra Luiz Mendez de Vasconcellos, the Bailiff of Acre, who had with great success represented the Order as Ambassador in Rome and in Paris. This election was a compliment paid to Vasconcellos by the Convent, for as he was eighty years of age there was not much probability of his ruling the Order much longer. Although still active and clear-headed, after six months his health gave way and he died. He was laid in the vault of St. John's Church on the 6th March 1623.

During his brief reign, the old Knight

showed much good will, but also a degree of obstinacy, especially in a quarrel with Bishop Cagliares. The Bishop had acquired a plot of ground in Valletta whereon to build a house for his own use. The Grand Master, who during his long life had seen enough of quarrelling with authorities, was of opinion that if the Bishop were allowed to reside within Valletta, he would next try to claim jurisdiction over the inhabitants of the City. He, therefore, issued orders forbidding the building of the Bishop's Palace. Remonstrances and appeals to Rome followed, and though the Bishop was finally allowed to build a Palace in Valletta, he was forbidden to have his Court or his prison in the town.

The Arms of Vasconcellos were three black bars alternating with three red cloudy (nebule) bars on a silver field. No medals and no gold coins are known of this Grandmaster, but he struck three silver coins, namely, four, three, and one, *tari* pieces, the copper *grano* and the three *piccioli*.





## ANTOINE DE PAULE 1623-1635

Three days after the death of Vasconcellos, Antoine de Paule, Prior of St Giles, an old man of seventy-one, was elected as his successor. At this time the policy of the Knights seems to have been to elect an old man for their chief so as to have frequent vacancies and greater chances of promotion. De Paule, however, disappointed his electors for he lived to be eighty-five.

De Paule, or "Paula", as he was known to the Maltese, was very popular owing to his open character and his great liberality. The Palace of S. Antonio, at Casal Attard, was his private property before he was elected Grandmaster, and on the day of his instalment, he entertained in it six hundred guests at dinner.

Unfortunately, the rejoicings which were kept up for weeks, were marred by cases of plague that broke out in September in the family of Paolo Emilio Ramucci, the Chief Sanitary Officer. The disease did not spread, and soon came to an end, so that many doubted if it was plague at all. For a long time, in Malta, a slight epidemic was, in a half called, sarcastic tone, the "Plague of Paulu Miliu" which was equivalent to "no plague".

At this time, the fleet of the Order had several encounters with Turkish ships with various results; at one time the Knights were victorious and came back laden with spoils, but at another, they left two galleys, the San Giovanni and the San Francesco, in the hands of the enemy. To make up for the loss, two galleys were presented by the Viceroy of Sicily. These were soon armed and manned, and the fleet, brought to its normal strength, went out again in search of adventure under the command of the gallant Knight Ximenes. In 1627, a sixth galley was constructed at the expense of the Grandmaster.

By this time, however, the Knights of S. John were apparently more apprehensive of the Pope than of the Sultan. Urban VII. who was no friend of theirs, had formed a congregation of Prelates whose business it was to audit the affairs of the Order and, on several occasions, he conferred commanderies in the Language of Italy on his own friends or relatives, in disregard of the claims of the old Knights residing in the Convent.

A Chapter General of the Order was due at this time, and the Pope asked that the Inquisitor should be present. The authority of the Grandmaster was thus shaken, and

practically destroyed, to the great disgust of the Knights who had already been much vexed at the title of "Eminence" given by the Pope to the Grandmaster instead of that of "Most Serene Highness", to which they considered he was entitled. The Bishop was also deprived of his rights to certain pious bequests which were now assigned, first to the Fabbrica di San Pietro and, later on, to the Holy Inquisition.

The rivalry between the Order and the Holy See could not be allowed to continue, and Monsignor Imbroll, a Maltese ecclesiastic, Prior of the Conventual Church, was sent to Rome as Ambassador of the Order. The learned Prior put the case for the Order with such tact, that a complete reconciliation was effected to the great satisfaction of all concerned.

By this time, the people, who had hoped to see administrative reforms made in their favour were much disappointed, for although apparently in sympathy with the people, Paula followed the ways of his predecessors in his official acts. He published laws regulating the University and the supply of food-stuffs, but at the same time, he added to the local taxation and deprived many families of feudal property.

Paula had a country residence on the hill overlooking the Marsa, in the lands called "*tal Gherien*," around which a few houses soon began to cluster. To encourage the formation of a village, the Grandmaster called the place officially "Casal Paula," built the church of Santa Ubaldesca, and granted to the inhabitants the privilege of not being liable to prosecution for debts for a period of time. This new village became, for a time, quite popular, but it did not grow as rapidly as the Grandmaster desired. Disregarding the official name given to it by the founder, the people have always called the village "*Rahal Gdid*" "the new village," and as such it is known to this day even though it is old and has grown to be a populous centre.

It was Paula who devised the large system of fortifications beyond Valletta, planned by the Engineer Floriani of Macerata, an important and extensive scheme which had to be abandoned for want of funds.

For a number of years, the Island was prosperous, owing mainly to the numerous prizes taken by the fleet. The population had, by this time, considerably increased, and a census taken by order of the King of Sicily, showed 59,923 souls in both islands, children

under the age of five years not being counted. When the Order landed in Malta the population was not above 17,000. (1)

The members of the Order, at the time of Paula, amounted in all to 621, and the total number of aliens, including slaves, soldiers and sailors, to 4,430 persons; 8,533 head of cattle, including horses, mules and pigs, were recorded in the census.

The prosperity of the Island was mostly based on plunder, and of necessity precarious, so that, towards the end of Paula's reign, the Treasury was once more empty, and the people hungry. The Viceroy of Sicily, Prince Paternò, refused supplies, and seized large sums of money due to French Knights, Spain being once more at war with France.

Paula died on the 9th June 1635. His arms were a silver peacock standing on a golden sheaf of wheat under three stars, on a blue field.

At the beginning of his reign, Paula found the silver and copper coinage so much deteriorated that he had to strike a new issue of small coins. He enacted that the silver coins which could not be withdrawn from

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(1) See Appendix V—Country districts in Malta at this time.

circulation should be weighed both by those who offered them in payment as well as by those who received them, under penalty of confiscation of the coins. His coinage was a repetition of that of his predecessors, namely, the *zecchino*, the silver *tari* pieces, and the copper small coins.



## JEAN PAUL LASCARIS CASTELLAR 1635-1657

De Paula's successor was a Provencal Knight, a native of Nice, Fra Jean Paul Lascaris Castellar, Bailiff of Manosque, descendant of the Counts of Ventimiglia.

The Viceroy of Sicily at once showed himself hostile to the new French Grandmaster, who was supposed to have a leaning towards the King of France, and continued to withhold supplies from Sicily. Lascaris gave assurances that he would keep a strict neutrality between the two rivals, and gave proof of his sincerity by ordering a battery to fire on a French ship which had attempted to anchor in the harbour of Marsascirocco. The Viceroy, convinced of the Grandmaster's sincerity allowed the exportation of wheat, but Lascaris had great difficulty in appeasing the King of France who seized the lands of the Order within his domains as a retaliation for the insult offered to his flag. During the war between the two Christian Princes, the fleet of the Order kept a strict neutrality, but harassed Turkish commerce with relentless vigour.

In 1638, an action was fought against three Turkish warships convoying a fleet of merchant vessels, and much booty was carried



to Malta. In 1640, the General of the galleys, the Prince of Hesse Darmstadt, gained another naval victory.

Four years later, the Knight de Piancour and Boisbaudran captured a large Turkish galleon, after a desperate fight, and took three hundred and fifty slaves and thirty women of the Harem, among whom was a Sultana with her infant son. The child, educated in Malta by the Dominican Fathers, became a monk of that Order and was known as the Ottoman Father. This feat of arms roused the anger of the Sultan Ibrahim, as the Turkish vessel was conveying to Egypt an Aga governor of the *Serraglio* with a rich collection of jewellery and decorated furniture. The booty seized by the Christians was great indeed, but the vessel itself was so badly damaged by gunfire that it sunk soon after the fight. The Turks had 600 killed in action, and the Maltese galley lost 3 knights and 116 of the crew and had 260 wounded.

As a reprisal, the Turks attacked Candia, at the time in possession of the Venetians. The Maltese galleys sailed to help the Venetians and greatly distinguished themselves. Seven years later, a Venetian squadron, helped by seven of the Maltese galleys

under the command of Fra Gregorio Caraffa, defeated a Turkish fleet at the Dardanelles.

Lascaris' great aim was the creation of a strong navy, but this did not hinder him from planning many important public works.

The frequent attacks on Turkish ships caused the Convent to take special precautions against a probable invasion of Malta. The army was reorganised and increased, and foreign troops were enlisted. The Floriana bastions were completed, and new fortifications were erected on the southern shores of the Grand Harbour planned by the great expert Father Maculano da Firenzuola. A new fort, named St. Agatha, was built on the Melleha coast.

All these works cost a great sum, and the Grandmaster found it hard to obtain the necessary funds. La Vallette's expedient of coining brass tokens to replace the silver currency was finally resorted to. Lascaris coined 5,000 scudi worth of this base money but he did not redeem them as La Vallette had done. He further issued stringent orders that all possessors of silver coins should forthwith exchange them against the new tokens. Later on, he coined 10,000 scudi in small coppers such as *grani* and *piccioli*, 70,000 scudi were obtained on loan, and

finally another issue of 6,000 scudi of brass money was ordered.

These measures reduced the people to extreme poverty and subjected them to great inconveniences. All able bodied men were either called to serve in the army or obliged to work at the fortifications, and all the villages of Malta had to contribute a certain number of foot soldiers or cavalry.

As ecclesiastics were exempt from military duties, and even the tonsure was enough to mark one as an ecclesiastic, thousands put themselves under the protection of the Bishop. The Grandmaster was so angry at being thus baffled, that he complained both to the King of Spain and to the Pope against the action of the Bishop who was finally compelled to refrain from giving clerical status to married men.

Another cause of discontent was a decision of the Grandmaster to dismantle Notabile, which was thought by military experts to be untenable in case of siege. This was never carried out, but the brass cannon were removed and replaced by inferior iron ones. The people of Notabile objected to losing their guns, and when the soldiery were dragging a heavy piece towards Valletta, the women, thinking themselves immune from

penalty by reason of their sex, attacked them furiously. Lascaris caused many of the women to be arrested, tried and imprisoned. The population was so incensed at this harshness that "*Wich Laskri*", (the face of Lascaris) became an expression of contempt and is used to this day.

In 1639, some young Knights who had been reproved by the Grandmaster, laying the blame of their chief's interference on the Jesuit Fathers, created such a disturbance, on one of the Carnival days, that as a measure of precaution against the popular tumult the Jesuit Fathers had to be sent out of the Island. They returned, however, as soon as the cause of the commotion was known.

Up to this time, the quay of the Grand Harbour on the Valletta side, had extended from the Lower Baracca to the fish-market, in the middle of which, stood a fountain with a bronze Neptune. Further on, the sea shore was rocky and unapproachable, so that, the short quay was quite inadequate for the needs of the town, which had become a considerable commercial centre. To remedy this inconvenience, Lascaris constructed the mole extending from the fish-market to the west end of the harbour at the Marsa.

He joined this to the Old Marina by means of a tunnel known as the "Mina Lascaris". Over the intervening rocky hill and along its sides, down to the main gate, known at that time as "Porta del Monte," the Grandmaster constructed a summer house and a fine garden in which several fountains were made to play. This was known as the Sultan's garden "*Gnien Is-Sultan*", and a portion of it is still preserved.

Outside Valletta, the Grandmaster constructed the enclosure known as the "Maglio" for the game of pall mall (*palla a maglio*). The Knights who used this playground, paid a fee which went towards the maintenance of a lecturer on mathematics.

Another important work was the construction of a Lazaretto, or Pest-house, on the small islet to the north-west of Valletta. As the ground on which the Lazaretto was built belonged to the Cathedral Church, it was exchanged for fields at Fiddien. The Lazaretto of Malta, one of the first to be built in Europe, was intended for the isolation of contagious diseases, especially plague, which epidemics occurred yearly in the Mediterranean ports.

Lascaris had the powers of all the municipal authorities vested in one body under

the "Seneschal", a high Court official, but at the end these powers were reduced to superintending the buying and selling of foodstuffs.

In 1640, a code of laws called the "Constitutiones" was published. These were, on the whole, just and humane and, by them, contrary to the usage of the time, the judge was assumed to be the counsel for the prisoner.

In 1644, the first printing press was established in the Island by one Pompeo del Fiore, who was granted patent rights for a certain period and the use of a room in the Bakery of the Order.

It was during the reign of Lascaris that the frescoes of the Grandmaster's Palace, representing scenes from the siege of 1565, were painted.

In 1653, the Grandmaster intructed his Ambassador to the Court of Louis XIV to open negotiations for the acquisition of the French Antilles, and a year later, the Islands of St. Christopher, St. Bartholomew, St. Martin and Santa Cruz, were ceded to the Knights of St. John for 123,000 Tournois francs. The Bailiff De Poicy and, after him, the Knight De Salles, ruled the Islands in the name of the Grandmaster.



In 1665, however, the Maltese Antilles were re-sold to the West India Company.

After a reign of twenty-one years, Lascaris died on the 14th August, 1657, at the venerable age of ninety-seven.

The arms of this Grandmaster were a black double-headed crowned eagle in a golden field. His medals are very fine, one being of gold and three of silver. He issued an abundant brass coinage with numerous varieties, and tokens of four and two *tari*, resembling those of La Vallette. The latter bear the device of two joined hands with the inscription "*non aes sed fides*". As these coins could be easily counterfeited, subsequent Grandmasters, at their accession, had to stamp them as a guarantee of their genuineness. It is curious to see tokens of Lascaris so covered with hall marks, as to render their original design unrecognisable. In a jocular mood, the Maltese used to call the four tari piece "*patacca*" meaning a worthless coin. The other coins of Lascaris are the gold *zecchino* and the silver *tari*.





## MARTINO DE REDIN 1657-1660

On the 17th August 1657, after a keenly contested election, Martino De Redin, Prior of Navarre and Viceroy of Sicily, obtained the majority of votes. The Inquisitor actively opposed the candidature of De Redin and went so far as to declare that, in case of election, his nomination would not be sanctioned. Alexander VII, however, sent written instructions to the Inquisitor, Monsignor Degli Oddi, to recognise the new Grandmaster and ordered the fleet of the Holy See, under the command of his nephew the Prior Bichi, to convey him from Sicily to Malta. The Grandmaster showed his gratitude by conferring on the Prior Bichi a rich commandry and a diamond cross worth 1200 crowns.

The Maltese were overjoyed at De Redin's election for they foresaw that he would secure for them an unlimited supply of wheat from Sicily. In fact, soon after, so great a quantity of wheat was imported free of duty, that new granaries had to be built to store it, and the price of wheat came down to six scudi the salma. We read that on the 4th February 1658, the

Grandmaster enacted that wheat should be sold at 7 tari per tumolo under the penalty of ten years of slavery in the galleys and the confiscation of the property of the guilty merchant. Under the same penalties, this edict prohibited the manufacture of biscuits without a special licence. This time of plenty was such a rare occurrence that it was long remembered by the people.

To protect the coast from sudden incursions of barbarians, De Redin erected, at his own expense, fourteen watch-towers round the Island, the Order undertaking to mount two guns and to keep a guard of four men in each.

So long as the war between France and Spain lasted, the fleet of the Order, wishing to preserve a strict neutrality, did not even harass the Turks for fear of giving offence to France, the avowed friend of the Porte. In 1660, however, peace was concluded between the Christian Princes, and Malta solemnised the event with great rejoicings.

After a short reign of thirty months, De Redin died on the 6th February 1660, at the age of seventy.

His arms are a simple red and silver cross quarterly on a blue field. Two medals



## DE CLERMONT GESSAN 1660

Two days after the death of De Redin, the Chapter elected for their chief Fra Annet De Clermont De Chattes Gessan, a French Knight universally esteemed for his virtues. Unfortunately owing to his advanced age and the wounds he had received at the capture of the town of Mahometa, in Africa, his reign was short. Before he had time to survey the business of his Government and to suggest innovations, the old warrior sickened and died on the 2nd June 1660, having enjoyed the pre-eminence of his station for the short period of four months. He was then in his seventy-third year of age.

The arms of Clermont show two silver crossed keys on a red field. The Grandmaster struck one bronze medal of which only one specimen is known, now preserved in the Library of the City of Lyons. He coined one silver four *tari* piece, of which no varieties are known, but had no gold or copper coins.

## RAPHAEL COTONER 1669-1663

Raphael Cotoner, Bailiff of Majorca, was elected Chief of the Order on the 4th June 1660. Though not an old man, he died on the 20th October 1663.

The fleet of the Order was, during Cotoner's rule, constantly cruising in the Mediterranean, more especially in the neighbourhood of Crete, which the Christian Princes had for a number of years been trying to capture from the Turks. To help the Christian cause in 1660, the Order sent to Crete a squadron with 400 Maltese soldiers and 70 Knights. In recognition of the great services rendered by them on this occasion, the Venetian Senate decreed that the Knights of St. John should be allowed to appear fully armed in the territories of the Republic, an exceptional privilege when the strict usage of the times is taken into account.

In the course of frequent encounters with the enemy, a number of rich prizes fell to the commanders of the galleys, and the population of Malta was kept fully supplied with provisions and merchandise. R. Cotoner was a generous and magnificent prince who spent his money freely on works of public utility. He enlarged and, in part, rebuilt the Hospital or *Sacra Infermeria*, and engaged

eminent artists to decorate the Conventual Church of St. John. Foremost among these was the painter Mattia Preti, known as "Il Calabrese", from the place of his birth. This great artist spent the latter part of his life in decorating the buildings of the Knights. Having refused to be paid for his work, he was received into the Order as a Brother, and kept in Malta at the expense of the Community. At his death, he was honoured by being buried in the Conventual Church.

The painting of the ceiling of St. John's Church, undertaken under the auspices of Raphael Cotoner, was completed under those of his brother Nicholas.

It was in Raphael Cotoner's time that the building called the Upper Baracca, on the Italian bastion, was roofed by the Knight Balbiano, Prior of Messina, in order that the Knights of the Language of Italy should be able to meet there in all kinds of weather. Under the Coat-of-arms of Balbiano a Latin inscription cut on a marble slab still records the fact.

The arms of the Cotoners were a cotton branch on a gold field. Raphael struck a small silver medal and four silver coins, viz: the four *tari*, the three *tari*, the one *tari*, and the *carlino*; he struck no gold or copper coins.

## CHAPTER XII.

**N. Cotoner—Caraffa—A de Wignacourt—  
Perellos—Zondadari—Manuel de Vilhena—  
Pinto**

NICHOLAS COTONER 1663-1680

Nicholas Cotoner a brother of Raphael was elected Grandmaster on the 23rd October 1663. During his rule, Louis XIV of France requested the cooperation of the Order against the Barbary pirates who infested the western Mediterranean. The Christians distinguished themselves greatly in this campaign, but the attempt to obtain a foothold on the African shores proved unsuccessful. In 1667, the Turks made a desperate effort to take Crete from the Venetians. The Christian Princes once more came to the rescue, and the Knights of Malta sent a squadran to their help. Two years later, another squadron was sent to Crete, but the Turks, in spite of desperate opposition, did at last take the Island which



had resisted their attacks for a quarter of a century.

The fact that the Venetians had been forced to come to terms with Turkey rendered the position of the Maltese Islands very perilous, and the Grandmaster had to turn all his attention to the defence of the Convent. Valletta was strong enough to resist an attack, but there was nothing to prevent an enterprising enemy from taking Borgo and St. Angelo. The fortifications of this part of the Island had therefore to be improved and eminent engineers were asked to report thereon. Count Valperga, the engineer of the Duke of Savoy, was asked to revise the plans drawn up by Floriani and Firenzuola, and on the 28th August 1670, the first stone of the Cottonera fortifications was laid with much pomp. These fortifications were to extend for about three miles between the extremities of the ditches of Senglea and Vittoriosa and to consist of eight large bastions and two demi-bastions.

In addition to this great work it was necessary to strengthen the outer defence of Valletta and to construct a fort at the mouth of the Harbour, opposite St. Elmo. The Knights were alarmed at the expen-

diture involved in these schemes, and did all in their power to oppose the wishes of the Grandmaster, but when new taxes were devised to raise the money, and land owners, including the Church, were called upon to contribute their quota, the Knights came forward and contributed important sums. The Bailiff Francesco Ricasoli gave 30,000 scudi and assigned 3,000 scudi a year out of his income, to help in the construction of the proposed fortifications on the so-called "Punta dell'Orso", at the mouth of the Grand Harbour. In recognition of his great generosity the Council of the Order decreed that the new fort should be known as "Fort Ricasoli". The tax on Church property was made with the consent of Pope Clement X, but it was, shortly after, replaced by special duties on tobacco, spirits, coffee, playing cards, soap, leather, etc. The university was taxed to the extent of 50,000 scudi.

This great outlay of money from private and public sources impoverished both the Treasury of the Order and the population. To make matters worse, plague broke out in 1676. It lasted for six months, and about 11,300 people were reported to have died. When the epidemic was over,

the Grandmaster decreed that a chapel dedicated to the Blessed Virgin should be built at Floriana on the site of an old one known as Sarria, erected in 1585 by the Knight Martino de Sarria. It was also decreed that the feast of the Conception of our Lady should be solemnly celebrated, and that a procession should, on that day, visit the chapel and a thanks giving service sung for the miraculous deliverance. To commemorate the event, the Jurats of Valletta, enlarged the Church of St. Roque in Strada Sant'Ursola.

In 1676, Cotoner founded a chair of surgery and practical anatomy, and regular medical courses were given to students in the Sacra Infermeria.

Cotoner was a great builder and his coat-of-arms adorns many walls in Valletta and is very conspicuous on those of St. John's Church. For the advantage of the commercial community, Cotoner constructed the quay along the northern shores of the Grand Harbour with steps leading to the sea, thus completing the mole devised by Lascaris. He also nominated a commission to effect a radical reform of the laws, but did not live to see the result of its labours. He died in 1680, at the age of seventy,



## GREGORIO CARAFFA 1680-1690

On the 2nd. May 1680, the Prior of Rochelle, Gregorio Caraffa, who had won distinction in the command of the Maltese galleys at the battle of the Dardanelles, was proclaimed Grandmaster by the General Assembly of Knights. He was Neapolitan by birth, and the third Italian Knight elected to the supreme dignity of the Order in Malta.

During Caraffa's rule the Order sent ships to the help of Austria, hard pressed by the Turks. This caused a flattering letter of thanks to be addressed to the Grandmaster by the Emperor Leopold in 1683.

At this time, an alliance against the Turks was formed, the principal members being the Pope, the Republic of Venice, the Emperor, the King of Poland, and the Knights of St. John. The alliance lasted for several years and many expeditions were sent against the Turkish States under its auspices. Prevesa, Santa Maura, the Port of Corone, Napoli di Romagna, and the Dalmatian coast, were scenes of battles fought and won by the allies. Their only check was suffered at Negroponte, where an army of Maltese

soldiers headed by thirty-nine Knights was exterminated.

In 1688, an English fleet under the command of the Duke of Grafton visited Malta, and Henry Fitz James II, was cordially received by the Grandmaster who presented the nobleman with the Grand Cross of the Order, evidently hoping that James II would, in the near future, re-establish the valuable priories of England.

With the help of the German engineer Grunenberg, Caraffa completed many of the fortifications devised by his predecessors, for the finances of the Island had considerably improved under his rule. He struck as many as 4,000 gold sequins, a rare event in those troubled days.

In commemoration of the election of an Italian Grandmaster, the Auberge d'Italie was reconstructed by the Italian Knights and its façade lavishly decorated with Caraffa's bust as the principal ornament. The marbles for this magnificent trophy are said to have been taken from ancient temples at Notabile.

During Caraffa's rule, the "Università dei grani", a central office in which all business in connection with the selling of food-stuffs was transacted, was transferred to

a large building at the head of Strada Mezzodì close to the church of "La Vittoria".

The quay near the Custom House which had been destroyed by a gale, was restored and the following inscription set up: —

DOMINANTE

EM. FRA. D. GREGORIO CARAFFA M.M.

TUTUM HOC CYMBARUM REFUGIUM

PROCELLIS RADICIBUS EVULSUM

SACRA REL. HIER. ERIGENDUM CURAVIT

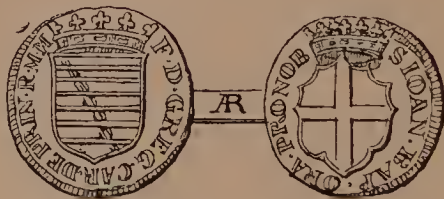
ANNO SALUTIS MDCLXXXVI

The commission appointed by Nicholas Cotoner to compile a new code of laws, reported during Caraffa's term of office, and, in 1681, a code of laws compiled by the lawyer Massimiliano Balzano was published. These laws known as the *Prammatiche*, inspired by legal reforms in Italy, embodied new and liberal ideas which had never before appeared in Maltese codes.

Caraffa died on the 21st. July 1690. His arms show three silver bars crossed by a green branch on a red field. He struck a fine bronze medal of 48 mm. with full face bust in high relief. Two smaller copper medals, bearing the arms of Cospicua, believed to have been struck by relatives of the Grandmaster, are known.



Caraffa's coins consist of the usual gold *zecchino* and of the silver four *tari*, the three *tari*, and the one *tari*. He struck no copper coins.



## ADRIEN DE WIGNACOURT 1690-1697

Three days after the death of Caraffa, Adrien de Wignacourt, nephew of the Grand-Master Alofius, was raised to the supreme dignity, in 1601.

The numerous battles in which the Order had lately taken part, had caused considerable distress in the Island, and the number of widows and orphans was so great that the new Grandmaster started for their relief a fund to which he himself generously contributed.

In January 1693, a violent earthquake shook both Sicily and Malta. In Malta the shock was not very severe, but in Sicily thousands of houses were destroyed and the town of Augusta was reduced to a mass of ruins. A squadron laden with supplies was promptly sent to assist the inhabitants of Augusta, the Grandmaster giving large sums from the Treasury and from his private purse. The Cathedral Church at Notabile was practically destroyed by the earthquake, but although the work of reconstruction was at once taken in hand, it was not completed until seven years later.

During Wignacourt's rule, Pope Innocent XII proved very friendly to the Knights.

The fleet of the Order being short of oarsmen, he sent to Malta a great number of slaves to be employed on the galleys, and by using his good offices, he succeeded in bringing about the reconciliation of the Knights with the Genoese Republic. These tokens of friendship helped the prospects of peace abroad, and the Order was able, once more, to look after its home affairs. A great arsenal was constructed in which several galleys could be built at once and where munitions of war could be stored in great quantity.

Wignacourt died on the 4th of February 1697. Of this Grand Master we have a large oval bronze medal with his full faced bust in armour. Up to this time, the *zecchino* had been the coin of highest value, but Adrian struck a *four zecchini* piece. His silver coins are the four *tari* and the *carlino*, and his copper, the *grano* and the *diniere*.

## RAMON PERELLOS 1697-1720

The Aragonese Knight, Fra Ramon Perellos y Roccafull, Bailiff of Negroponte, was elected chief of the Order three days after the death of Wignacourt.

Perellos distinguished himself more in civil administration than in warfare. A strict disciplinarian, he tried to check the disorders so frequent in the Convent and caused many restrictive regulations to be framed, for the young Knights had, long ago, abandoned austerity, and laughed at reforms attempted by the Grandmaster.

The unrest in the Convent was, as usual, accompanied by intrigues and acts of enmity between the Bishop, the Grand Prior, and the Inquisitor. Questions of right and privilege were continually being submitted to the Grandmaster who finally appealed to Rome to have peace restored. Innocent XII intervened and brought these quarrels to an end. To commemorate this event and the restitution of several commanderies by the Pope, Perellos placed a bronze bust of Innocent XII on the front of the Church of our Lady of the Victory with the following inscription:

D. E. V.

INNOCENTIO XII

OPTIMO, ET SANCTISSIMO PONTIFICI,

DISSIDIIS COMPOSITIS

INTER ECCLESIASTICUM

ET MAGISTRALE FORUM EXORTIS,

UTRIQUE JURIBUS PIE SERVATIS,

PLURIBUS COMMENDIS LIBERALITIR RESTITUTIS

EM. ET REV. DOMINUS

FR. D. RAYMUNDUS DE PERELLOS Y

ROCCAFULL

GRATO ET UNANIMI OMNIUM VOTO

TOT TANTAQUE BENEFICIA

AETERNITATI DICAVIT

ANNO A SACRO VIRGINIS PUERPERIO

MDCIC.

Perellos caused large granaries to be built for the storage of wheat which had begun to flow into the Island under his peaceful rule. To the Conventual church of St. John he gave a magnificent set of tapestries, which cost him the sum of £4,000 and is now worth ten times that amount. He lived in grand style and formed a bodyguard called "Guardia Magistrale" which was constantly in attendance at the Palace.

Though a peaceful ruler, Perellos could not fail to see that the galleys of the Order were obsolete and no longer a match

for the Ottoman navy. He therefore built, at his own expense, a large ship, the "San Raimondo", and three others, the "St. John," the "St. James" and the "St. Catherine", at the expense of the Treasury. These ships were placed under the command of the Bailiff Spinola, an experienced general. In an encounter between this fleet and a detachment of Tunisian vessels, the "St. John" captured the enemy's flagship with fifty guns and a crew of three hundred and seventy men. The vessel was added to the squadron of the Order under the name of "Santa Croce". Other minor naval victories were won, but a few vessels were also lost. On one occasion, a galley under the command of the Knight Spinola was sunk with 500 men and 22 Knights. A year later, the galley "S. Paul" shared the same fate, and in 1708, the gallant commander De Langon lost his life whilst fighting an Algerine ship, and was mourned by the whole Convent.

In order to commemorate the gallantry of the Knights, Perellos raised outside Valletta an advanced gate called the "Porte des Bombes" upon which was cut the inscription "*Dum Thraces ubique pugno in sede sic tuta consto*" ("Whilst I fight the Turks





## MARC'ANTONIO ZONDADARI 1720-1722

Perellos was succeeded by an Italian Knight, Fra Marc'Antonio Zondadari, nephew of Pope Alexander VII and brother of the powerful Cardinal Zondadari. He was elected Grandmaster on the 22nd January 1720.

It was customary for the Grandmasters, soon after their election, to make a formal entry into the old capital of Notabile and swear in the hands of the Jurats of that town that they would uphold and respect the rights and privileges of the Maltese. This had become a matter of form, for, in spite of the solemn oath, no Grandmaster ever thought much of the rights and privileges of the people and some ignored them altogether. According to Vassallo, the historian, (*Storia di Malta* 1854 pag. 691), Zondadari refused to swear to maintain what he knew to be against the principles of the Order, and, after his election, declined to go through the usual ceremony at Notabile. Such breach of customs is not probable and would have provoked bitter comments and general protests. A contemporary publication, on the other hand, describes the solemn entry of the Grand Master

at Notabile and his taking the prescribed oath.

The new Grandmaster conferred several honours on the representatives of the Maltese municipality or University, allowed the Jurats to wear a distinctive robe, and granted them the privilege of carrying a silver mace at the head of official processions. To the people, he was kind and, though a strict disciplinarian, favoured their sports and merry-makings.

To encourage commerce, he enlarged the building in which the Commission, known as the "Consolato del Mare", a sort of shipping agency and Court for naval cases, transacted its business. His marble bust over a suitable inscription can still be seen on the facade of this building in Sda. Mercanti which is now used as the Public Registry.

The inscription runs thus:

MARCUS ANTONIUS ZONDADARIUS M.M.  
HAS AEDES IN COMMODIOREM FORMAM  
REDACTAS  
PUBLICIS MELITAE NEGOTIIS,  
ET PUBLICAE PIETATI APERUIT  
ANNO DNI MDCCXXI

During his short reign, the fleet was often actively engaged against the infidels, and many important prizes were captured

and towed into the Grand Harbour. The capture of enemy vessels was considered a great event by the people, for it meant a sudden drop in the price of foodstuffs and free circulation of money.

Zondadari died in June 1722. His arms were three roses on a silver bend between two golden bendlets on a blue field. In 1721 he struck one bronze medal, Samson struggling with a lion. This representative medal shows for the first time a Grandmaster with a long flowing wig. Zondadari minted two golden pieces, the *four zecchini*, and the *one zecchino*, besides one silver *four tari* piece and one *carlino*, or ten grain piece.



## ANTONIO MANOEL DE VILHENA 1722-1736

To the joy of all classes of the people, Manoel de Vilhena, Bailiff of Acre, a very popular Knight, was elected to succeed Zondadari. Soon after his election a Turkish invasion of Malta was attempted. The enemy had expected to be helped in this enterprise by the numerous Moslem slaves in the Island who had arranged to take up arms as soon as a Turkish fleet appeared. The Knights, warned of these hostile intentions, were fully prepared to receive the enemy, and placed the slaves under strict supervision. The fleet appeared before the Island and the Turkish Admiral sent a haughty letter to the Grand-master demanding the surrender of the Island, but seeing how well prepared the Knights were to receive him, sailed away without even attempting a landing.

Although the fortifications were in good condition, Manoel now set himself to improve them. He strengthened the bastions of Vittoriosa and erected the "San Salvatore" fortifications. He also strengthened the bastions of Floriana, and in 1762, constructed Fort Manoel on the Sliema side on the islet known as *Il Gzira*. This fort, considered

to be the most elaborate fortification in the Island, was designed by the two famous engineers of King Louis XIV of France, Gion de Mondian and De Tignè, in 1715. The main square of the fort was adorned with the bronze statue of Vilhena removed in the early sixties, and now standing at the head of the Maglio Gardens on the way to Floriana.

To encourage civil enterprise, De Vilhena completed the building of the suburb within the fortifications designed by the engineer Floriani. This suburb, now called Floriana, was officially named "Città Vilhena", and in it the Grandmaster erected and endowed from his own purse two important public buildings, an institution for poor girls and a hospital for incurable diseases.

For the recreation of the people ("ad honestam populi oblectationem") as it is still recorded on the main entrance, he built the Manoel Theatre, which opened on the 19th January 1732 with a performance of Maffei's "Merope". This theatre is still existing and used for the purpose the Grand Master had destined it.

Manoel, who had broad political views, managed to negotiate a treaty of peace with the Sultan of Constantinople, but the oppo-

sition of the Turkish Admiral prevented its ratification. Hostilities were therefore carried on as usual, and one fleet of the Order secured many prizes and freed many Christian slaves.

As a proof of his affection for the Grandmaster, and for high services rendered to the Holy See, Pope Benedict XIII presented him with the Estoc, or Sword of Honour, and the Cap, a compliment usually paid only to crowned heads. The regalia blessed by the Pope, were brought from Rome by the Knight Abbati Olivieri who delivered them to the Grandmaster with great solemnity in St. John's Church, on the 3rd May 1725. They were afterwards preserved in the Treasury of the Church.

Manoel de Vilhena died on the 12th December 1736, at the age of seventy-six, deeply regretted both by the Knights and by the people.

Vilhena was a man of good artistic judgment, and his buildings, coins, and medals, are among the best left by the Order.

His rule marks a new era in the history of Maltese coinage. 200,000 gold zecchini struck between 1722 and 1727 were mostly exported by speculators owing to their intrinsic value. The gold coins of Manoel



were pieces of 12, 10, 4, 2 and 1 zecchino. The silver currency was completely changed and instead of the usual coins, pieces of 2 *scudi*, 1 scudo, 8 tari, 6 tari, 4 tari, 2 tari, and 1 tari were struck. The Copper coins consisted of the *carlino*, the *cinquina* and the *grano*.

The arms of Manoel were a red lion on a silver field, but as this device was similar to that of Grandmaster La Cassière, the arms of Vilhena, a golden winged right hand grasping a sword, on a red field, were, later on, quartered with the Cross of the Order. Manoel de Vilhena's medals are numerous and highly artistic. One of them, of silver, shows the plan of Fort Manoel with the inscription:—"*ad ultionem inimicorum et Vallette tutamen 1724*". A smaller medal commemorating the building of the same fort, has the legend: *arx ad Marsamusciatum in Vallettæ tutelam et securitatem posita* An. 1723". A fine bronze medal, ninety-seven mms. in diameter, represents the bust of the Grandmaster in perruque and complete armour, while the reverse shows in high relief a fort, a ship, a warrior and a lion. A fourth bronze medal, eighty-two mms. in diameter shows the statue of the G.M. erected in Fort Manoel with the inscription: "*grati*



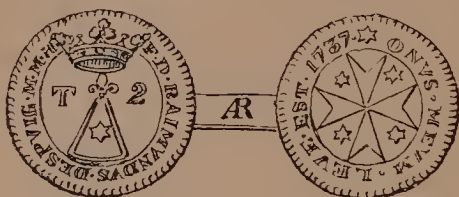


## RAYMOND DESPUIG 1736-1741

On the 16th December 1736, Raymond Despuig, the Bailiff of Majorca, an aged Knight of pious disposition, who did not belong to any of the extreme parties, was elected to the Grandmastership. His rule was marked by no stirring events, and only a few naval encounters with Barbary corsairs are recorded. Of the public works erected during his time, the most important is the bastion behind the Cathedral Church of Notabile, known as "*Ta Baccar*", built at the expense of the Knight Vaccaro.

Despuig died at Naples on the 15th January 1741. His arms are a golden fleur-de-lis on top of a blue mount on a red field. During his short rule, Despuig gave much attention to civil administration; he fixed the precedence of Magistrates, a question which had been debated for a long time before his days. He substituted the silver coins of his predecessor by others of a lower value; this deception is, however, attributed to the greed of some of the officials. No gold coins of Despuig are known, owing to the abundant gold coinage of his predecessor, but his silver coins include the *one scudo* piece, the six,

four and two silver *tari* pieces, and the *ten grain*, *five grain* and *one grain*<sup>1/2</sup> piece in copper. No medals of this Grand Master are known.



## MANOEL PINTO 1741-1773

On the 18th January 1741, the Knights elected as their chief Fra Manoel Pinto de Fonçeca, a native of Portugal and Bailiff of Acre. His reign is usually described by historians as long, prosperous and glorious. It was certainly long, but its prosperity and glory appear to have been over-rated. The people were completely ignored except as a source of revenue, and the Knights were allowed to lead an easy life, full of intrigue. The Order had steadily, though by slow degrees, lost the chivalrous spirit for which it had, for so long, been renowned, and Pinto's rule saw the final decay of the virtue and independence of the Hospitallers.

Pinto had long been intriguing to obtain the kingdom of Corsica for himself, and the Genoese government had already taken informal steps to settle the matter with the Order. The King of France, however, disliking the project, gave the Grandmaster to understand that he must renounce his dream of Kingship. Pinto was much vexed at the French King's interference, but had to submit to this, and, not long after, had to endure further humiliation at the hands of

France. On the 6th November 1760, a Turkish man-of-war called the "Ottoman Crown", approached the Grand Harbour in full sails. Boats were sent alongside, when it was discovered, to the great astonishment of those who boarded her, that the ship was manned by a Christian crew. This Turkish galleon had been cruising in the Greek Archipelago, when the seventy Christian slaves she carried decided to make a dash for freedom, when the rest of the crew had landed on one of the Islands. The coup-de-main was completely successful and the ship was brought safely into Malta. The Knights welcomed the crew and gladly took possession of the ship, which mounted sixty-eight guns. Mustapha III was so incensed that he threatened to invade Malta if the Order did not return the ship forthwith. The Knights gave a haughty answer to the challenge and were preparing for a Turkish attack when France intervened in the quarrel, and forced the Grandmaster to return the ship to the Sultan. Later on, owing to pressure from France, the Order declined to send their fleet to the aid of Russia when war broke out with Turkey in 1773. Unfortunately, the fleet of the Order was, at this time, more decorative than useful; the ships were

gorgeously painted and hung with bunting, but so greatly over-manned and under-armed that they were, probably, more dangerous to their crews than to the enemy.

Military discipline was so slack that the Moslem slaves, of whom there were now in Malta a great number, felt themselves to be a match for the forces of the Order; they had a great deal of freedom, both in Valletta and outside, and were even allowed to meet together for their prayers. What the slaves needed to take up arms against the Knights was a chief to lead them and direct their movements. Quite unexpectedly, the greatly desired leader appeared amongst them. A Turkish galley carrying Mustapha, the Pasha of Rhodes, was captured by the fleet of the Order and brought to Malta. The noble prisoner was, through the good offices of France, accorded special privileges; he was lodged in a fine house and granted a princely allowance and numerous slaves. Allowed to receive visitors freely, he soon became the idol of the Moslems in Malta. In a short time, he naturally fell in with the views of his co-religionists and was made the head of a great conspiracy intended to secure the Islands for the Sultan of Constantinople.

In 1749, the plot was laid out in

its minutest details, and the revolt was timed to take place on the 29th June, as it was a custom of the Maltese to spend that day, the feast of S. S. Peter and Paul, in the Boschetto gardens at Notabile. It was rightly thought that the deserted state of the towns would favour the rebels.

The plot would have succeeded had not indiscreet words, uttered during a petty quarrel between two of the conspirators, brought about its discovery. The foul plan reached the ears of the Knights in time. Some of the conspirators were at once arrested and made to divulge the whole plot. The slaves were to murder their masters, including the Chief of the Order himself, and a fleet from Barbary was to approach the Island in time to help the insurgents.

A sensational trial followed, when nearly all the slaves were condemned to death. They were tortured, and executed in batches. Most of the infidels were marched through the streets of Valletta and led to high scaffolds erected in the public squares on which they were birched, branded, and finally hanged, beheaded or quartered. Those who consented to be baptized were put to death without further torture. These cruel scenes went on for a whole month, the Knights



showing themselves pitiless avengers. The Pasha, the real leader, was, however, spared owing to the solicitations of the French Ambassador who did not even allow his friend to be tried with the other conspirators.

During these troublous days, the Treasury of the Order was empty and the price of food rose daily. In order to provide work for the people, the Order took in hand the construction of roads and fortifications. A large fort was built at Imgiar in Gozo, to be used as a place of refuge for the people in case of an invasion. The Knight De Chambray contributed 40,000 scudi to the cost of this work of defence, named Fort Chambray in his honour. About this time, the Magisterial palace was enlarged, the "Castellania", or Court of Justice, was built in Strada Mercanti, and the Custom House at Marina was planned. Along the quay of the Grand Harbour a chapel and nineteen large stores, known to this day as the "Pinto Stores", were built.

An attempt was also made to start a silk industry. A great number of mulberry trees were planted on the plain of the Marsa and Sicilian workers were brought to teach

the art to the peasants. Silk worms were soon reared but the industry did not prosper.

In 1768, the Jesuit Fathers, chiefly through the intrigues of the Portuguese minister, were expelled from Malta, and their property transferred to the Knights by Papal authority. The Grandmaster could not ignore the importance of the educational work the Jesuits had been doing in the Island, and, having acquired their property, he felt bound to take over the schools they were compelled to relinquish. He, therefore, in 1769, founded the present University of Studies. Under the authority of the Pope, Clement XIV, four Papal briefs were granted to the new Institution, two of the 20th October 1769, and two of the 26th January 1771. Eminent teachers were invited to come to Malta and join the University staff, and in a few years, Diplomas in Philosophy, Law and Divinity were granted to scholars who had passed the prescribed examinations. Later on, Diplomas in Medicine and Pharmacy were added, and meanwhile special licences were granted by the Grandmasters to young men trained in the hospitals and in the galleys of the Order.

In 1760, Bailiff Fra Ludovico Guerin de Tencin purchased the valuable collection

of books of Cardinal Portocarrero with the intention of adding them to his own large collection and presenting the whole to the Order for the formation of a Public Library.

Pinto fell in with Tencin's views and proposed at once to have a building for that purpose close to the Magisterial Palace. The "Bibliotheca" was however built under G. M. De Rohan.

At the time of the Knights the books of the Order were stored in rooms adjoining St. John's Church.

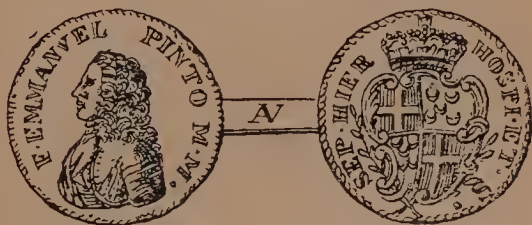
With all his disappointments, Pinto's dreams of sovereignty obsessed him throughout his life. In his petty kingdom of Malta he tried to be always an absolute master, particularly jealous of his rights. The Archbishop of Palermo, who claimed the right to send to Malta an Apostolic delegate, applied to his sovereign, the King of Naples, to have this minister sent in one of the royal ships. Pinto protested against the action of the Archbishop, and when the ship entered the Grand Harbour he sent a message to her captain that if the Archbishop's minister attempted to land he would sink the ship. The captain left the harbour at once and reported to his Government the singular reception he had at Malta. The King was

naturally very angry, and forthwith closed all the ports of his kingdom against Maltese vessels. Pinto was not daunted, but informed King Charles that if the Sicilian ports were not opened to him he would offer his services to the Barbary States and open his harbours to the Turkish fleet. The threat appeared to be effective, for the King of Naples was not long in removing the ban, and he never again attempted to interfere with the rights of the Grandmaster.

Pinto was the first Grandmaster to have his coat of arms surmounted by a closed crown topped by the Maltese cross, and to assume the title of "Most Eminent Highness" instead of the simple "Eminence" used by his predecessors.

Pinto died on the 23rd January 1773, at the age of ninety-two. His arms were five red crescents on a silver field. At his election, he struck a silver medal 56mm. in diameter, and a number of smaller silver and bronze medals when the first stone of the "Bibliotheca" was laid in 1765. Paciaudi gives the designs of a number of medals intended to be struck by the Order, illustrating the principal events of Pinto's reign, but it does not appear that these were ever issued.

The coins of Pinto are numerous but show a marked decadence in artistic taste. He struck first the usual gold pieces of four, and two *zecchini* and the one *zecchino*, but later issued a new coinage of twenty, ten and five *scudi*. He also struck the silver *dollar* or *thirty tari* piece, the *half-dollar*, or *fifteen tari*, the *two scudi*, one *scudo*, and *four tari* pieces. His copper coins were the one *tari*, one *carlino*, one *cinquina* and one *grano* pieces.



## CHAPTER XIII.

### **Ximenes — De Rohan**

FRANCESCO XIMENES 1773-1775

In the long run, Pinto's despotic rule had become odious both to the Knights and to the people, and there would probably have been open revolt if he had lived longer. On the 29th of June 1773, the people learned with joy that Fra Francesco Ximenes de Texada, the rich prior of Navarre, a grand seigneur lavish in promises, had been elected.

Though seventy years old, the new Grandmaster was vigours and alert. Some historians have stated that the Empress Catherine of Russia had in many ways favoured the election of Ximenes who on his part had for a long time countenanced Peter the Great's scheme of establishing Russian power in the Mediterranean. The great hopes built on Ximenes were soon dispelled and the Maltese discovered that they had a change of master but not of Government. With the

idea of enforcing strict economy, the Grand Master dismissed a number of officials and reduced the salaries of many others. To the humble protests of the first victims he answered in a firm and arrogant manner.

Anxious to show that the people were not entitled to any consideration from the Government of the Order, he issued a high-sounding decree in which even the snaring of rabbits by civilians was made a criminal offence to be severely punished. The people grumbled audibly and the clergy who had, so far, enjoyed an independent jurisdiction, drew up a strong protest against the violation of the privileges of the people, guaranteed by the King of Spain and repeatedly confirmed by the Order. This protest was in great part inspired by Don Gaetano Mannarino an ecclesiastic who appeared at the head of several subsequent movements against the Grandmasters' abuses of authority. Ximenes remonstrated with the Bishop, Monsignor Pellerano, who in a dignified answer maintained that the priests were within their rights in petitioning the Grandmaster. This quarrel between the two supreme authorities, civil and ecclesiastical, increased the unrest of the people, already fomented by the news



that the Grandmaster was at the point of increasing the price of wheat.

When the Bishop again protested against Ximenes' abuse of power, the Grandmaster appealed firmly to the Pope, with the result that poor Monsignor Pallerno was called to Rome where he remained for the rest of his life. Repeated acts of the high-handed policy on the part of the Grandmaster and the Knights so exasperated the people that they began to raise their voice in public. The overzealous clergy, who embraced the cause of the people, inspired by turbulent leaders, thought they were strong enough to set at defiance the authority of the Grandmaster even to the extent of taking up arms against him. A plot was hastily set on foot; and a handful of armed citizens, together with a small number of ecclesiastics, arranged, on the night of 9th September 1375, to effect an entrance both into St. James Cavalier on the west of Valletta, and into fort St. Elmo on the east. St. James Cavalier was not garrisoned, and the ambitious zealots gained access to it by means of false keys. Fort St. Emlo was entered quietly with the connivance of one of the soldiers of the Order. The assailants succeeded in isolating the small guard and, without firing a single shot,



The Impluvium in the Roman Villa Museum-Rabat.



Ghain Rasul—St. Paul's fountain

(Courtesy of Smith's Dock Journal)

occupied the best fortress of Valletta. Early next morning alarm guns were fired from both forts and the astonished Knights saw the red and white ensign of the Maltese hoisted on the ramparts of Valletta. The Governor of the city called the Knights to arms and the Grandmaster, amazed at this overt act, sent an envoy to parley with the rebels and to get a clear statement of their grievances. The St. Elmo party declared that what they and the people wanted was the observance, on the part of the Order, of the conditions under which Malta was ceded by Charles V. and that they were ready to give up their arms if the privileges of the people were once more solemnly confirmed and the rebels granted a free pardon.

The Grandmaster greatly relieved at having to deal with such mild proposals, sent back a message stating that the liberties and the privileges of the Maltese had always been respected by the Order, but that he was ready, out of his own good heart, to grant a free pardon to all concerned, if rebels would give up their arms and go quietly to their homes. The assailants, who, by this time, had fully realised that the population was not ready to follow them in their mad

enterprise, left St. Elmo and scattered crest-fallen in all directions.

The old Grandmaster was highly incensed to learn how small a party had compelled him to parley, and ignoring his promise of a free pardon, promptly issued orders to have the prominent members of the conspiracy arrested and locked up. He next applied to Rome for permission to punish by death the ecclesiastics who had taken up arms against the Government. Both Knights and people expected a sensational trial ending in a general slaughter, as had taken place in Pinto's time in connection with the conspiracy of the slaves, but they were not prepared to witness cold-blooded murdering without even a mock trial. This is, however, what occurred. The persons arrested were locked up and smothered by their jailers, and the bleeding heads of three of them, impaled on long halberds, were exposed to the public view on the main gate of St James' Cavalier. The lesson was taken to heart and no popular outcry followed this brutal show of despotism.

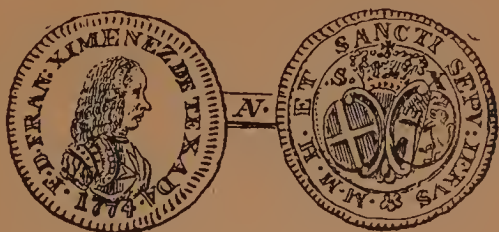
No wonder that, a few days later, general rejoicings greeted the news of Ximenes' illness and death, that took place on the 9th November 1775.

Two silver medals were struck by Ximenes.

On one side they show the bust of the Grandmaster and, on the other, the emblems of commerce and prosperity with the words "temporum felicitas" and "Felicitas publica" respectively. No irony could be more bitter than that unconsciously expressed by the two mottoes on these medals.

Ximenes struck only gold and silver coins viz: the *twenty* and *ten scudi* pieces in gold, and the *two scudi*, *one scudo*, *four tari* and *two tari* pieces in silver.

The arms of Ximenes de Texada were a silver tower with banner volant on a green field, joined to a red field with a crowned lion rampant.





## EMMANUEL DE ROHAN 1775 - 1797

Ximenes' successor, the French Knight François Marie des Neiges, Emmanuel de Rohan Polduc, who was elected on the 12th of November 1775, was already a popular Knight both with the Convent and the people. He was a bailiff of justice, a general of the galleys and Commander-in-chief of the land forces of the Order, who had passed his youth in the Courts of Spain and Parma. Everybody hoped to see the fortunes of the Order revived under the new chief, but it was not in the power of any living man to keep back the tide that threatened the Order and, indeed, all European Governments.

The new Grandmaster began his reign by acts of conspicuous charity and munificence. He had the rebels' heads removed from St. James' bastion, and granted a free pardon to most of the political prisoners and to the deserters from the galleys. He made good the debts owed to the Treasury, paying the sums due out of his purse. He distributed large sums of money among the poor and, what was even more appreciated by the people, he granted audiences to all those who asked for them and admitted to the Palace the nobility and the



gentry who had so far been strictly excluded therefrom.

With the idea of reviving the languishing commerce of the Island, he instituted a Chamber of Commerce and a new Board of Knights and Merchants to superintend the grain market or "*Università dei Grani*". The grants to the University of Studies were increased and chairs of Navigation and Mathematics were added.

As the Convent could not forget the recent attempt to overcome the Government by force of arms, the Grandmaster was induced, for the defence of Valletta, to form a regiment of infantry 1200 strong composed of foreign soldiers. The old regiment of *Falconieri* was also reformed and brought up to a strength of 1200. To this regiment, composed of foreigners officered by Knights, *Maïtese* soldiers were however admitted. These two regiments proved so expensive that for their upkeep the silver plate of the Knights had to be melted and turned into coins.

De Rohan next turned his mind to legal reforms. In 1777, he invited a famous Neapolitan lawyer, Giandonato Rogadeo, to come to Malta and compile a new code of laws and regulations. The code, revised by a

committee of local lawyers, was promulgated in 1784 under the name of the "Diritto Municipale di Malta". These laws, based on sound legal principles, were a great improvement on the old codes in which justice played only a small part, but the political rights of the people were, on the whole, reduced and curtailed, in spite of the legal principles proclaimed.

De Rohan pleased the clergy and the people by hastening to fill up the episcopal See of the Island left vacant for a long time. The Pope asked the Grandmaster to submit to him the names of three ecclesiastics of whom one was to be Mgr. Labini. This was clearly an infringement of the rights of the Order, but De Rohan found it convenient to comply with the request of his Holiness and in 1780, Monsignor Labini was consecrated Bishop of Malta.

De Rohan strived to replenish the Treasury of the Order then greatly depleted. He obtained the restitution of extensive property the Order had lost in Poland and Russia, and, in 1782, he succeeded in bringing about an arrangement which was bound to benefit greatly the finances of the Order. The Elector of Bavaria offered to help the Order if a Bavarian Language were instituted. In order

not to add another Language to those already existing, it was arranged to revive the Langue of England under the name of the "Anglo-Bavarian Language". For this purpose, the consent of King George III of England was sought and obtained. For the new Language the palace erected by the Bailiff Carner, opposite St. Lazarus bastion in Valletta, now called "Auberge de Bavière" was acquired.

At this time, the Knights succeeded to the possessions of the Order of St. Anthony in France, instituted in 1095 for the care of lepers, and abolished by the French Government in 1768.

In spite of these financial successes, the future did not hold a bright promise for the Convent. The Order had grown to be an important naval power when the Ottoman Empire was a menace to Europe, but as the coasts of the Mediterranean were now safe from Turkish attacks, the navy of the Order had no proper mission and was kept mainly for show. In his "Travels in Egypt", Sonnini thus describes the Maltese galleys in the latter part of the 18th century:—

" They are defended, or rather embarrassed, by an incredible number of hands; the flagship had eight hundred men on board. They were superbly ornamented, gold blazed

“on their numerous bas-reliefs and carvings on  
“the stern; enormous sails, striped blue and red,  
“carried in the centre a great cross of Malta  
“painted red. Their gorgeous flags floated  
“majestically. In a word, everything concurred  
“to render them a magnificent spectacle.  
“Their construction, however, was little ad-  
“apted either for fighting or for standing foul  
“weather. The Order kept them rather as an  
“emblem of their ancient splendour than for  
“practical purposes. The navy was one of those  
“ancient institutions which had once served  
“to render the brotherhood illustrious but which  
“now only attested its selfishness and decay”.

In 1783, however, the galleys were able to render useful service when severe shocks of earthquake ravaged the southern coast of Calabria and the northern shores of Sicily. Reggio, Messina, and the villages all round them were wrecked in a few minutes. As soon as the news of the disaster reached Malta, the Knights equipped their galleys with stores, medicines, tents and clothing, and under the Bailliff Frelon de la Frelonnière the fleet sailed, amidst the cheers of the people thronging the bastions, and remained three weeks in Sicilian waters for the relief of the numerous sufferers. The prompt assistance rendered by the Knights on this occasion was greatly

appreciated and elicited expressions of gratitude and admiration from many a friendly Power.

In 1776, the "Publica Bibliotheca in perpetuum" was formally founded, and the erection of the building proceeded under the direction of the Architect Stefano Ittar (1785).

In 1793, the small fort on Sliema point (Dragut) was constructed and named Fort Tigné.

During the rule of De Rohan, the Order was shaken to its foundations by political events in Europe, and as the owner of a large amount of property in France, it was badly affected by the revolution. When Necker, the Government Treasurer, proposed that every owner of property in France should contribute one-third to help the finances of the Government, the Order promptly paid its heavy share, but soon after, Louis XVI applied to it for a further help, and the Knights advanced him 500,000 francs.

Before long, a decree subjecting the possessions of the Order to special taxation was passed by the French Assembly, and the next blow was aimed at the Knights themselves. Every Frenchman who was a member of any Order of knighthood requiring proofs of

nobility was forthwith declared to have ceased to be a citizen of France. The Hospitallers were dealt with in a more direct manner on the 19th of September 1792, when a decree was issued by the Government declaring the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem to be extinct within French territories and its possessions annexed to the national domains. The great property of the Knights in France was now lost beyond hope of recovery, and at the same time both from Spain and from Portugal came the news that the Commanderies in these countries were to be subjected to special taxation in view of the menacing attitude of France.

French Knights who did not choose to join the new regime fled the country and most of them found their way to Malta. The Order could not refuse them shelter and they were housed in the various Auberges without distinction of nationality. The Grandmaster himself is said to have reduced his table expenses to *one scudo* a day in order to set an example of frugality to his brother Knights.

The people, of course, shared the moral and financial distress of the Knights, though there was a fair commercial prosperity at the time, owing to the great number of foreign ships that called at Malta. Venice, then at war



with Tunis, used the Maltese harbours as a naval base for the refitting of ships during the whole campaign. Emo, the famous admiral of the Venetian fleet, died in Malta in 1792 and the Order honoured him with a magnificent funeral. His heart was deposited in the church of Our Lady of the Victory, where a marble slab records his virtues in a somewhat pompous style.

As many as sixty French vessels remained in Malta during the winter of 1793, and a number of English and Spanish ships entered the harbours and even recruited sailors in the Island on several occasions. Of the numerous Knights who lived at the expense of the Convent but contributed little to its reputation, many looked with secret longings towards France, feeling that it was nobler to die for a new ideal than to remain inactive in a small island ruled by an old and effete institution. Some of the liberal-minded Knights met frequently to discuss the new ideas put forward by the French politicians, and many civilians were drawn into their circle.

The so called *Jacobins*, full of revolutionary principles, increased daily in Malta; far from remaining passive observers, they joined revolutionary clubs, and even corresponded with French leaders such as the ex-knight



Dolomieu, at that time a prominent member of the new French Government. This correspondence, together with other information obtained by the Government, led Bonaparte to turn his attention to Malta as a stepping stone to his projected eastern expedition, and in 1797, he wrote to the Directory demonstrating the importance of Malta to France and the advisability of capturing it for political reasons.

The old Grandmaster saw clearly that the days of the Order were numbered but he never showed signs of despair. His whole faith was now placed in Russia, whose Sovereign was the only potentate capable of befriending the Knights in their hour of peril. The Empress Catherine of Russia died before she could give the Order a token of her long professed friendship, but Paul I, who succeeded her, signed a deed on the 15th of January 1797, by virtue of which a Grand Priory of Russia was to be incorporated in the Anglo-Bavarian Language, with a revenue of 300,000 Polish florins.

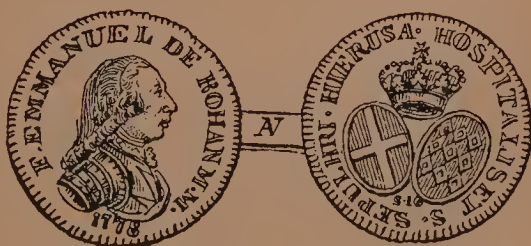
One of the couriers returning to Malta with the despatches relating to this transaction, while passing through Italy, was arrested by the French who had already occupied Ancona. The agreement with Russia was looked upon with suspicion by the French Government and

the Knights were accused of plotting against France. Depressed by these disastrous events, De Rohan died on the 13th July, 1797, leaving the Order in very straitened circumstances.

At his election, he had coined two medals, one with the inscription "*Gloria ejus per orbem terrarum*" and the other with the motto "*Melitae princeps et delictum*". In 1783, when Fort Tigné was erected, on the northern side of Marsamuscetto Harbour, he struck a bronze medal with an inscription to commemorate the event.

The coins of De Rohan are numerous but inartistic. His gold coinage consists of pieces of twenty, ten and five *scudi*; his silver, of thirty, fifteen, six, two and one *tari* and one *scudo* pieces; his copper, of the *carlino* the *cinquina*, the *half cinquina* and the *grano*.

De Rohan had for his arms nine golden lozenges on a red field.



## CHAPTER XIV.

### **Hompesch—Napoleon Bonaparte The Convention The French installed in the Islands**

FERDINAND DE HOMPESCH 1797-1798

De Rohan's death increased the general confusion in Malta, for there appeared to be no broad-minded statesman capable of assuming office at this difficult moment. On the 17th of July 1797, a middle-aged Knight, Ferdinand de Hompesch, Bailiff of Brandenburg, a great favourite of the people, was elected Grandmaster. His election seems to have been a foregone conclusion; Bonaparte was sure of it long before De Rohan was dead, and, in a letter to the Directory, he stated very clearly that a German would be the successor of the Grandmaster now lying on his death-bed.

The arms of Hompesch were a silver indented St. Andrew's cross on a red field. A gold 29 scudi piece, though dated 1778, is

attributed to Hompesch on account of the double headed eagle behind the arms of the Order, resembling that used by the Grandmaster on other coins. The coin is very rare, and the date must have been cut in error for 1798.

The other coins struck by Hompesch are the 30 *tari* piece, of which four varieties are known, and a fifteen *tari* piece dated 1798. No brass coins of this Grandmaster are known. A medal in white metal (80mm.) which has no reverse is supposed to be a mint proof. Another bronze medal (48mm.) bears the bust of the Grandmaster to the right with the legend *Ferdin. Hompesch. Melitae. Princeps.* and on the reverse two galleys in action and the inscription: "*Animosus vicit in certamine fortem*". Below are the words: "*Pirat. oppress. Luc. F. Jospho. Borg. 9. Aug. 1797.*"

Hompesch's first act was to ratify the agreement with the Russian Emperor. An eminent Knight, the Bailiff De Litta, sent to St. Petersburg with the ratification, was received with great ceremony by Paul I. on the 27th November 1797.

The Russian Emperor, now styled "Protector of the Order", was presented with the crosses of L'Isle-Adam and La Vallette, and all his sons, as well as the French Prince of

Condè, were invested with the Grand Cross of the Order.

In Malta, all seemed to go smoothly under the new Grandmaster, but the French Directory, which had determined to destroy the Order, had already sent to Malta Poussielgue, the first secretary to the French Legation at Genoa, under the pretext of inspecting and reporting upon the various seaports of the Levant, but in reality to make arrangements for the capture of the Island.

Poussielgue spent eighteen days in Malta, from December 24th to January 11th 1798, and despatched a detailed report to Bonaparte from which we learn that the Grandmaster and the Knights, unconscious of impending danger, were engaged on the details of a scheme to re-establish the old ceremonials which had by degrees lost much of their splendour.

There were then in Malta six hundred Knights, of whom two-thirds were French, and the divergence between members of the Order and the civil population was as sharp as ever. The nobility stood completely aloof from the Knights and the common people, for they had few rights left and lived in a kind of voluntary servitude. The regular troops in the Islands amounted to 2,210 men, and

the militia, 10,000 strong on paper, had no fighting capacity.

The revenue was reduced to about 205,000 scudi made up of 90,000 scudi of local property, 85,000 scudi of custom dues, 25,000 scudi of wine dues, and 5,000 scudi of other dues. Before the French Revolution, the annual income of the Order amounted to 1,315,296 scudi which in a few years rapidly dwindled away.

The fleet of the Order was reduced to two large ships, one of which still in course of construction, two frigates, and a few galleys and galliots.

In 1797, a small expedition organised by Bonaparte was placed under the command of Admiral Brueys, then at Corfu. The Admiral was instructed to land at a given point in Malta about 3,000 men who were to be secretly admitted into Valletta by friends within the walls. It seems, however, that Brueys, failing to receive the necessary funds and the ships he considered necessary for the expedition, gave up the attempt. In March 1797, the French fleet cruised close to the Island and sent into the harbour a small vessel, the "Frontin," under the pretext of re-fitting. The admiral then wrote to Bonaparte that he was confident that if he had had



the 4000 troops and the sums promised him he could have captured the fortress under guidance of the many friends who had promised to help.

Poussielgue's report encouraged the Directory to come to a decision about Malta, and during the first days of March 1798 the much talked invasion of England was abandoned, and the "great expedition against Malta and Egypt" was formally communicated to the staff of the army.

As Malta had never given direct cause to France to take up arms against her, the Executive Directory tried to find a reason for attacking a friendly state without provocation. The reason set forth in the order issued to the Commander-in-Chief was that the Grandmaster had declared he did not acknowledge the French Republic; that he had helped the Coalition of armed sovereigns against Liberty; that the Order had befriended Frenchmen who had been declared enemies of their country; that it was the intention of the Order to give up Malta to the powers who were at war with France. For these reasons, no act of the Legislative body was necessary to authorise the Executive Directory to adopt such measures as the national honour and interests required, and



they therefore authorised the Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the East to take possession of the Islands of Malta and to proceed thither at once with the land and sea forces.

The "Great Expedition", 49,608 strong, divided into five contingents, left Toulon on May 19th, 1798, and appeared off Malta at 4 p.m. on the 9th June. Bonaparte was on the flagship, the "Orient." Hompesch, who only a few days before had received a warning of the expedition from the Minister plenipotentiary of the Order in France, at once summoned a council of war. The Militia was called out and some of the forts were garrisoned. By the afternoon of the 9th, the whole French fleet of 472 sails spread out to the north of Valletta, and Bonaparte cruised in a small cutter along the coast to get a clear idea of the coastline and of the fortifications.

Definite orders were then issued to the Generals as to the landing of troops and the parts of the Islands to be occupied, and it was arranged that the Commander-in-Chief should give the signal during the night. In the meantime, a letter was despatched from the "Orient" to Caruson, the French consul in

Malta, instructing him to get an immediate answer from the Grandmaster. The French Consul ran to the Palace and delivered his message, a curtly worded request that the fleet be permitted to enter the harbour and water at the various anchorages.

Hompesch summoned the Council and asked if the permission should be granted. Those Knights who had secretly favoured the expedition, and those who feared to openly oppose Bonaparte's wish, were of opinion that the ships should be freely allowed to use the harbour, but the rest refused to admit such a powerful fleet into Valletta. Finally, it was agreed to send an ambiguous answer so as to gain time for further consideration. The Consul was informed that it was with the greatest sorrow that the permission asked for could not be granted, as the Statutes of the Order did not allow more than four vessels at a time to enter the harbour.

Caruson carried the message to the "Orient", and Bonaparte forthwith asked the Consul to send an ultimatum to the Grandmaster stating that Bonaparte was resolved to obtain by force what he had asked, and advised the Knights and the people to find some means of coming to terms with him

That same night, the French troops were landed at four different points; at Gozo under Reynier, at St. Paul's Bay under Baragney d'Hilliers, at St. Julians Bay under Vaubois, and at Marsascirocco Bay under Desaix. Early on the 10th, the forward movement was started and the principal forts were invested before evening.

The landing at Gozo was effected at Ramla Bay. The French troops cleared the heights and occupied the plateau and the small tower; after the complete landing of the force a rapid advance was made towards Rabat and Ghain Sielem. Fort Chambrai, in which all the people of the neighbouring villages had taken refuge, was invested and forced to surrender early in the afternoon, and the citadel of Rabat was occupied at nightfall.

Baragney, who landed at St. Paul's Bay, was able to establish himself completely on the northern shores of Malta after capturing the forts and the entrenchments from that bay to Melleha. The defenders did all in their power to withstand the rush of the enemy in this section but were overpowered and routed at all points.

Vaubois who landed at St. Julians's, split his division in two; Sliema was occupied,

as far as Fort Tigné, by general Lannes, with seven battalions, whilst five battalions under general Marmont were directed towards Misida and Birchircara, as far as the line of the aqueduct. Marmont's troops met with considerable resistance and had to fight their way to the aqueduct, but by nightfall the whole approach to Valletta was in the hands of the French.

Vaubois himself, with the rest of the division, advanced upon Notabile. The city was duly invested, but as the besieged understood that no serious defence could be made, a council was assembled at the Bishop's palace and a deputation was sent to the General informing him of their intention to surrender if their religion, their property and their institutions were respected. Vaubois granted these conditions and the keys of the city were solemnly delivered to him. The Bishop then asked to his table the General who accepted his hospitality.

On the south of the Island, Desaix's division landed at the Bay of Marsascirocco and tried at once to silence the guns of Fort Rohan and the numerous batteries on the heights. Early next morning, the fort capitulated and the troops were marched

upon Zabbar and Tarxien, and closed in upon Valletta from the South.

At the close of the 10th, the whole country was in the hands of the French who helped themselves freely to such movable property as they were in need of. Valletta was now pressed from all quarters, but the gates were locked and guarded early in the day; a strong force held the approaches to the Porte des Bombes.

The war council was summoned in haste to consider the French landing, and orders were issued for the defence of the fortified places, but unfortunately a small force had to be spread over a very long line of defence. The detachments sent to the distant forts were useless as they could not be supported, whereas if the defence had been limited to Valletta and the three cities, the Knights could have made a good resistance. Students of this period of Maltese history are of opinion that this blunder may have been intentional, as some of the French Knights had no earnest desire to oppose the French arms. In any case, there is no doubt that the resistance was on the whole half-hearted and weak.

Valletta was overcrowded with people who had rushed from the country before

the gates were closed; the streets and churches were thronged with panic-stricken people who watched the irresolute movements of the Knights and half believed the tales of treason that went round. The attitude of the clergy added to the general despondency. A religious procession was organised and the statue of Saint Paul followed by dense crowds of people was carried about the main streets. The crowds were thus led to believe that there was no human hope of deliverance.

The Grandmaster who never left the Palace was in constant consultation with the Council, and discussed with them the contradictory news he received from different points.

A party of influential citizens met in the evening in the town hall, and hotly discussed the events of the day and the steps to be taken. It was clear to them that the Convent could not resist the enemy for long, and that a weak resistance could only lead to bloodshed and destruction of property. They, therefore, agreed to lay their views before the Grandmaster asking him to arrange an armistice with the French before further damage was done to public property. The petition was actually drawn up and a deputation sent to the Palace to lay it before the Grandmaster.

The four deputies:—Baron Don Mario



Testaferrata, the lawyers Bonanni and Torregiani, and Giovanni Guido, a clerk in the Criminal Court of Valletta, were allowed to enter the hall in which Hompesch was sitting with the Council, and their leader addressing the council asked that the Order should ascertain the aim of the French General in attacking the Island, and the reason why the Order and the Maltese were regarded as enemies without the slightest reason. Some of the Knights stood up to stop the young deputy and the Bailiff Calvajo, Vice-chancellor of the Order spoke in haughty terms against the petition and declared it to be a piece of effrontery and an act of insubordination. The Grand-master, however, seemed pleased to find a way out of the difficulties which faced him, and assured Guido that the people's request would be taken into consideration by the Council.

After a heated discussion it was agreed to ask for the truce suggested by the people. De Fremaux, the Consul for Batavia, empowered to communicate with the French General, despatched at once his clerk M. Melam with a letter to Bonaparte. An answer came from General Berthier informing the Consul that Bonaparte would send special deputies at noon to discuss the armistice. The deputies



Junot, the Brigadier general Poussielgue, and Dolomieu, an ex-member of the Order, arrived at the appointed hour.

The Grandmaster signed without hesitation the armistice drawn in the following terms:

“An armistice is agreed to, from six in  
“the morning of to-day the 11th June 1798,  
“to the same hour of to-morrow, the 12th,  
“between the Army of the French Republic,  
“under the command of General Bonaparte,  
“as represented by the Chief of brigade Junot,  
“first aide-de-camp, and his Most Eminent  
“Highness, for the Order of St. John of  
“Jerusalem.

#### Article II.

“Within these twenty-four hours deputies  
“shall be sent on board the “Orient” to dis-  
“cuss the capitulation.

“Signed in duplicate in Malta, the 11th  
“June 1798.

“(Signed) JUNOT. (Signed) HOMPESCH”

The Council was not summoned neither for ratifying the armistice nor for selecting the deputies who were nominated there and then without formality and even without discussion. The Maltese were represented by Baron Mario Testaferrata and by the two lawyers, B.

Schembri and G. Nicola Muscat, together with the councillor F. Bonanni, the Order by the Knight Ransijat, who only a day before was a prisoner in Castel St. Angelo for having refused to fight against the French, and the Bailiff Frisari the representative of the king of Sicily in Malta. The Chevalier D'Amat, ambassador for Spain, in Malta, was asked to be present at the signing of the document. Doublet, the French secretary to the Granmaster, was sent with the deputies to help them with his knowledge of the language and of public business.

The Deputation escorted by the French envoys left Valletta without any credentials or special instructions, and drove to St. Julian's Bay, where they found boats ready to carry them to the "Orient". The flagship was far out at sea, and the deputies, who had left Valletta at sunset, did not reach her till midnight. Bonaparte was asleep when they arrived; after some time he came to meet them and, there and then, wrote out the articles of the capitulation, remarking, in jest, that he would call it a convention out of consideration for the feelings of the Order. The following was the text, which was drafted, approved and signed, in less than an hour:

CONVENTION: Agreed to between the French Republic, represented by Bonaparte the General-in-Chief on one part, and the Order of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, represented by M.M. the Bailiff De Turin, Frisari, the Commander De Bosredon-Ransijat, the Baron Mario Testaferata, Doctor Nicholas Muscat, the advocate Benedetto Schembri, and the Councillor Bonanni, on the other part, and through the mediation of his Catholic Majesty the King of Spain, represented by M. the Chevalier Felipe de Amat, his Chargé d'affaires at Malta.

*Art. .1*

The Knights of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem shall give up to the French army the City and the forts of Malta: they shall renounce in favour of the French Republic the rights of sovereignty and of property they have on the Island and on Gozo and Comino.

*Art. 2.*

The Republic shall employ its influence at the Congress of Rastadt to obtain for the Grandmaster, during his lifetime, a principality equivalent to that which he is

giving up and, in the meantime, the Republic undertakes to pay him an annual pension of 300,000 francs, and a sum equivalent to two years pension as an indemnity for the loss of his personal property. He shall retain, during his stay at Malta, the military honours he previously enjoyed.

*Art. 3.*

The French Knights of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, who are at present at Malta and who shall be recognised as such by the Commander-in-Chief, shall be allowed to return to their country; their residence in Malta shall be considered as residence in France.

*Art. 4.*

The French Republic will assign an annual pension of 700 francs to the French Knights actually residing in Malta; this pension shall be of 1000 francs for the Knights whose age is above 60 years.

The French Republic will endeavour to induce the Cisalpine, the Ligurian, the Roman and the Swiss Republics to grant a like pension to the Knights of such nations respectively.

*Art. 5.*

The French Republic will endeavour to induce the other European powers to allow Knights of their nationality to retain their rights over the property of the Order of Malta, existing in their dominions.

*Art. 6.*

The Knights shall be allowed to retain their private property in Malta and Gozo.

*Art. 7.*

The inhabitants of Malta and Gozo shall continue, as heretofore, to enjoy the free exercise of the Catholic, Apostolic and Holy Roman Religion; they shall preserve their property and the privileges they now possess. No extraordinary contributions shall be exacted.

*Art. 8.*

All civil acts passed during the Government of the Order shall remain valid, and shall take effect.

Given in duplicate on board the "Orient" off Malta, the 24th Prairial, the VIth year of the French Republic (12th June 1798).

(Signed) BONAPARTE,

le Commandeur Bosredon-Ransijat; il Barone Mario Testaferrata; il dottor G. Nicola Muscat; il dottor Bened. Schembri; il consigliere V. F. Bonanni; il Balì di Torino, Frisari, (salvo il diritto di alto dominio che appartiene al mio Sovrano, come Re delle Due Sicilie), el Caballero Felipe de Amat.

The deputies were landed at daybreak, bearing the news that the Gouvernement of the Order had come to an end.

The Convention was formally proclaimed to an anxious public from the Banca Giuratale. Some rejoiced, others were deeply grieved, but the masses were indifferent. The Jacobins and those who had been imbued with the new principles of freedom and equality could see nothing but good in the change of Government. The partisans of the Order, and more especially those who were creditors of the Knights anticipated ruin, for they knew how the new comers hated the privileged classes, and how little they could depend on their promise to make good their losses.

The masses, who were never very well treated by the Order, but who admired their pageantry and had grown accustomed to their paternal care, were sorry that the Knights should go, but at the same

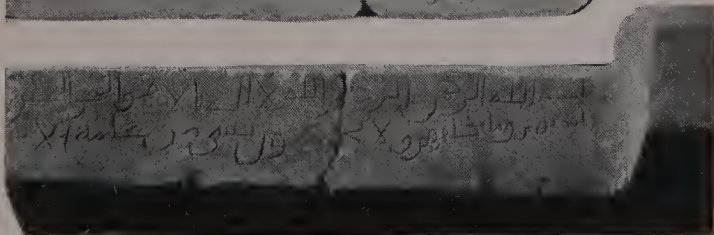
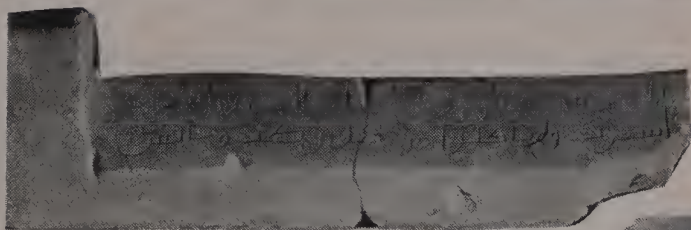
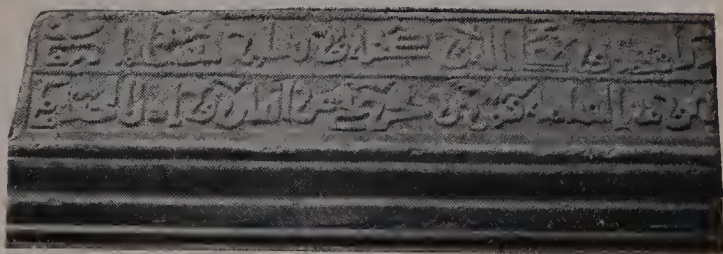
time, cherished vague hopes that a new era of prosperity would dawn under the government of the Republic. The soldiers, who suspected treason, were easily prevailed upon to be friendly with the enemy they had hoped to resist in battle. Some continued to fire at the French and the others turned their arms upon the Knights, in whom they had lost all confidence. The clergy were asked to intervene and Bishop Labini went personally to appease the Cottonera people who were causing great trouble.

The Dignitaries of the Order hastened to confer with the Grandmaster. Some insisted that he should refuse to ratify the Convention, others thought that there was nothing else to do but accept the situation and welcome the French General.

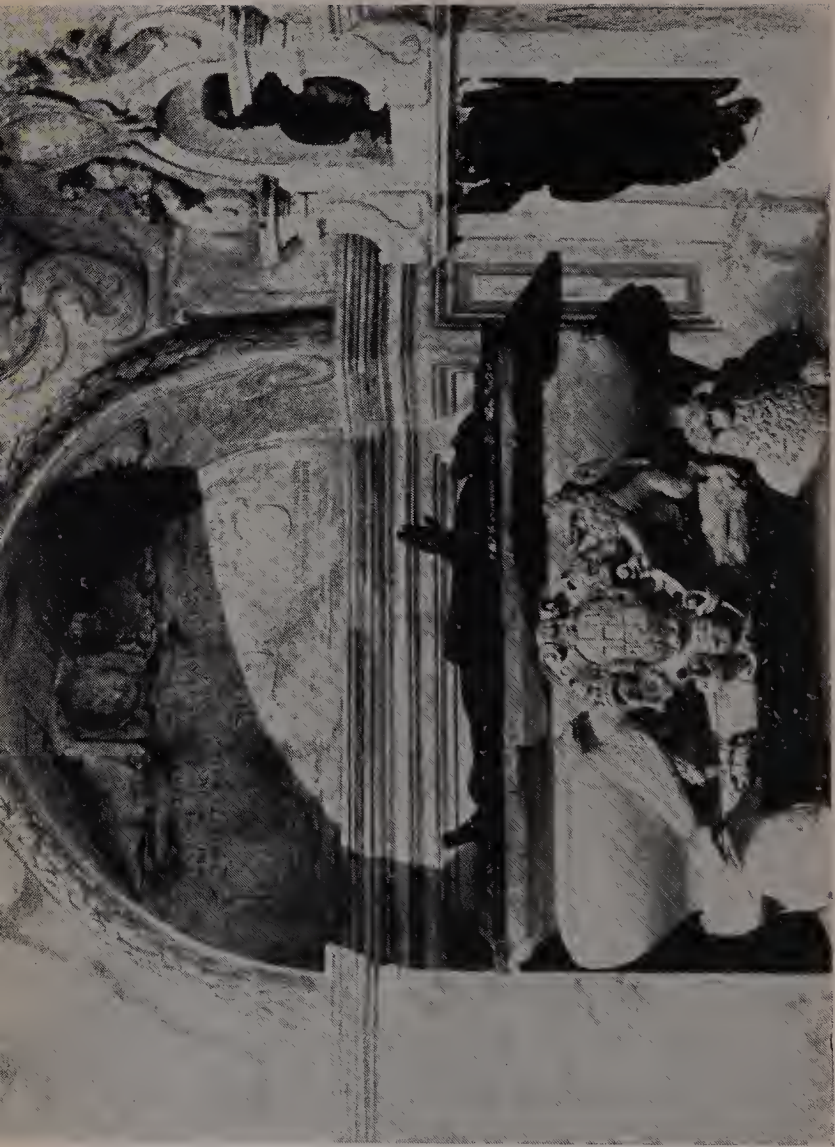
The French fleet, in the meantime, was slowly entering the harbour, and the gates of the city were thrown open to admit the troops. Bonaparte himself landed at the Old Barriera and walked up through Strada Levante and Strada S. Cristoforo, surrounded by a dense crowd of officers.

The Grandmaster surrounded by all the Grand Crosses and other dignitaries, stood ready at the Palace to receive Bonaparte who ignored them and after visiting his own





Saracenic inscriptions in Kufic characters  
From Rabat—Malta.



Sepulchre of to Grand-Master Jean de la Valette in the crypt of St. John's Church.

friends at the Banca Giuratale in Strada Mercanti. He then proceeded to inspect the fortifications, and afterwards dined with Bishop Labini at Città Vecchia and lodged for the night in the Banca Giuratale.

Next day he attended a thanksgiving service at St. John's Church, standing under the canopy of the Grandmaster.

The Palazzo Parisio (now the Post Office in Strada Mercanti) was offered to the General by the nobleman Parisio, and Bonaparte with his personal staff, took up his quarters there, and remained till 19th June, when with the whole army he left the Island for Egypt.

On the 12th June, and on the following days, Forts Sant Angelo, Manoel, Tignè, Ricasoli, St. Elmo, and the bastions of Burmola, Cottonera, Vittoriosa, Valletta and Floriana, were occupied by the French. Two line-of-battle ships, one frigate, and four galleys of the Order were seized; from the forts, 1,200 guns, 40,000 muskets and 1,500,000 lbs. of powder were removed.

During the six days he was in the Palazzo Parisio, Bonaparte nominated a commission to take charge of the Government of

the Islands, issued orders concerning the civil, military and ecclesiastic systems he intended to introduce, divided the Island into twelve districts (cantons) and gave written instructions about all important political and social reforms.

On the 13th June, the Grandmaster visited Bonaparte, who showed but little respect to his dignity and his age and during the brief interview, Hompesch was asked to leave the Island within three days.

The Grandmaster returned crestfallen to the Palace and set to work to leave the Island with his Knights. He wrote to the General asking permission to carry with him the archives of the Order and the official papers, but this was refused. He was also forbidden to take with him the plate belonging to the Magisterial Palace and to the various Auberges, but was allowed to take his own silver plate, furniture, wine, and all the provisions he wished. He was also permitted to carry away three precious relics which had for a long time been kept in the church of St. John, viz: a fragment of the True Cross, brought from the Holy Land, St. John's arm in a silver reliquary, presented by Bajazet to Grandmaster d'Aubusson, and the miraculous image of the Holy Virgin of

Philermo. These relics were sent to Hompesch stripped of all the gems and other valuable objects with which they had been adorned. As compensation for the loss of property attached to the Grand Mastership, Hompesch was promised 600,000 francs, but of this, only one half was paid to him, 100,000 francs in cash, and the rest in four drafts upon the Treasury of 50,000 francs each. The remaining 300,000 francs were retained by the French, ostensibly to pay the Grand-master's debts. It is well known, however, that the creditors of Hompesch never received a penny from the French Government.

Several knights were allowed to take passage with their chief, but the majority were given passports for other countries; a good number joined the French army and followed Bonaparte to Egypt.

Bonaparte summoned the Bishop and the dignitaries of the Church before him at the Palazzo Parisio, and urged them strongly to be good citizens, and to attend to their spiritual duties only. His words were harsh and spoken in so menacing a tone that the clergy left Napoleon's presence firmly persuaded that the freedom promised them would soon prove an illusion.

The occupation of Valletta was now



complete. Forty thousand troops were allowed to land and visit the town, and the officers were billeted in the houses of the gentry. The soldiers, flushed with success, were bent on pleasure and were, naturally enough, unmindful of the rights of the citizens.

Stringent regulations followed, abolishing nobility and privileges, recruiting men for the army, banishing the foreign clergy, limiting the rights of the ecclesiastics, and disarming the population.

A public notice was printed on the 13th June, setting forth the chief reasons the French Republic had to take strong measures against the Order. This was really meant to show the Maltese that they had nothing to fear from the new Government, as they could not be held responsible for the actions of the Knights.

The very day on which Bonaparte took up his quarters in Valletta, not less than six Orders were issued, the first appointing a Commission for the government of the Islands, the second nominating the personnel of this Commission, (\*) the third decreeing the expulsion of certain Knights and other foreign persons, the fourth containing a list of

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\* See Appendix VII.

persons allowed to remain in the Island, the fifth ordering the putting of seals to the property of all British, Russian, and Portuguese subjects, the sixth appointing Monge and Berthollet to make an inventory of public property.

This inventory showed that the treasury of St. John's Church contained about 1,000,000 francs worth of silver, gold and precious stones; the Palace of the Grand-master about 125,000 francs, and the Government safe of Gozo 18,000 francs. The estimated booty seized at Malta by Bonaparte amounted in all to 1,227,129 francs.

The 14th July was made a grand national holiday, to be celebrated with the utmost pomp under the auspices of the Government and of the Commander-in-Chief. On that day a pole, topped with the Phrygian Cap of Liberty, was erected in the Palace Square, then renamed "*Place de la Liberté*", and the French flag was hoisted amidst the playing of bands and the firing of guns. Speeches were read by the Naval Commander, by Vaubois, by the Commissary, by Ransijat, the President of the Commission, and by a member of the Commission on behalf of his colleagues. The troops paraded the gorgeously decorated streets, and the day



ended with a general illumination and public festivities.

Notwithstanding these official rejoicings the burden of French rule was beginning to be felt throughout the country. Friction between the officials and the people became frequent and insubordination followed. Scathing cartoons against government officials, posted in public places in Valletta, became such a nuisance to the Government that a public notice against scurrilous posters had to be published. The authorities were uneasy at the visible unrest of the population, but they had to deal at the same time with the more urgent difficulties of food supply, caused by the attitude of the King of the Two Sicilies, and with the reported presence of the British fleet in the Mediterranean. Moreover, the Government funds were shrinking to an alarming extent, and although the sale of national property was duly authorised, no one came forward to acquire it.

Further decrees followed. The people were ordered to wear the tricolour cockade, and to remove escutcheons from the interiors and exteriors of buildings. They were forbidden to seal letters with armorial bearings or to use feudal titles. The churches were decorated

with the arms of the French Republic, instead of those of the Grandmaster.

The population was to be disarmed, but a company of thirty young men was to be formed in ten days as a guard of honour, and sixty young men, selected from the richest families of the Island, were to be sent to Paris to be educated in the colleges of the Government, their parents contributing 800 francs per annum and 600 francs for the expenses of the journey. Six rich young men were to join the fleet as naval apprentices and the wealthy inhabitants were to form a battalion of National Guards 900 strong.

All priests and members of religious communities of both sexes, who were not natives of the Islands, were to leave Malta within ten days. No religious vows were to be taken before the age of thirty, and no new priests were to be ordained until all the others were employed. Only one monastery of each Order was to be allowed, and all surplus of ecclesiastical property was to be sold for the relief of the poor.

Taxes on food, tobacco, horses, domestics etc., were to be levied to bring in at least 720,030 francs, annually, to the Treasury.

The Bishop had his jurisdiction reduced

to the simple control over ecclesiastics; religious marriages were declared illegal and civil marriage instituted. The Pope was denied all power in the Island, even in matters relative to Religion, and appeal to him in any case was declared to be unlawful.

At the time of the Order, wind-mills could not be owned as private property and this restriction in the grinding of corn was confirmed by the French.

It is easy to imagine the effect of these hasty orders on the peaceful population of the Island, accustomed for centuries to an easy life, in which the nobility and the priesthood were considered as sacred bodies. While enraging both nobility and clergy, these orders did not serve in the least to estrange the people from those bodies.

Having set French rule on what he imagined to be solid foundations, Bonaparte left for the conquest of Egypt on the 19th of June. The new Government continued the series of reforms initiated by Bonaparte, and on the day following the General's departure we find that, contrary to the provisions of the Act of capitulation, national property to the value of £12,000 was ordered to be sold for what were declared to be "the needs of the garrison and the navy". This edict pro-

duced as much discontent as that which interfered with religious freedom.

General Vaubois, the Commander-in-Chief in Malta, was allowed a garrison of 3053 infantry and five companies of artillery. Besides these troops, he formed several regiments of local levies. Those who had served under the Order and were over fifty years of age, were engaged to form companies of veterans. About 2000 well-to-do men under the age of fifty were enrolled to form a National Guard. A Company of thirty young men was organized as a guard of honour to accompany the General in all the ceremonial parades. A regiment, 800 strong, was formed from the country people who had previously been enrolled in the regiment of "Falconieri." These soldiers were called Chasseurs, and were officered by Maltese.



## CHAPTER XV.

### **The rising of the Maltese against the French Nelson's intervention Capitulation of the French**

On the 28th August, 1798, the French man-of-war "Guillaume Tell", and the two frigates "Diana" and "La Justice", entered the Grand Harbour with the news of the defeat of the French fleet at Aboukir by Nelson, on the 1st of August. The Government at once published a proclamation announcing that the French troops were victorious in Egypt and had occupied Cairo, that the Maltese soldiers who had left Malta with Bonaparte were safe, and that the great victory was only marred by a mishap to the fleet. "It is our duty", concluded Vaubois, "to try to imitate and avenge the brave sailors who died for their country".

The news of this naval reverse increased the uneasiness of the population, who feared further restrictions, now that the French could not move freely in the Mediterranean.

The financial difficulties of the Government were so pressing that strong measures were resorted to in order to raise money. As a good deal of ecclesiastical property had been acquired by the suppression of pious associations and monasteries, it was decided to dispose of some of it for cash. On the 2nd of September 1791, a sale of some property of the Carmelite friars of Notabile was attempted. A large crowd of people assembled near the church attached to the Convent, and cries of indignation were uttered when the red damask of the church was taken down by the officials and offered for sale. At the sign of popular unrest the officials desisted from their work, and left the church in some haste. Seeing that their protest was not made in vain, the crowd followed the French party out of Notabile, towards the church of the Franciscan monks at Rabat, and hustled them with increasing violence.

The French escort tried to stem the commotion but when the officer in charge brandished his sword in the face of the crowd, the people rushed upon him in an angry mood and killed him. Bloodshed excited the crowd to a frenzy and the cry "down with the French" was taken up, when every Frenchman in the neighbourhood fled for his life.



The French soldiers inside Notabile closed the gates against the crowd; this increased the anger of the people who now realised they had gone too far to hope for mercy from the French soldiery. The die was cast and nothing was left to the people but to fight it out.

Messengers were sent to the neighbouring villages to announce that a revolution had broken out at Rabat against the French and that blood had already been shed. The church bells sounded the tocsin and in a few hours all the villages knew that the people of Rabat had struck for their freedom. By the close of the day, nearly the whole population of the Island had resolved to stand against the French misrule.

The approaches of Valletta were watched and every Frenchman or pro-French Maltese found outside the City was either imprisoned or put to death. At Zebbug, the people took possession of the armoury of the district, killing the keeper, and at Attard, the small armoury of Sant'Antonio was ransacked early in the afternoon.

The news of the rising reached Valletta first as a vague rumour, but details were afterwards confirmed by eye-witnesses. The Governor at once placed the City under mili-



tary control and cut off all communication with the country.

On the 3rd September, the people forced their way into Notabile and massacred the whole garrison. A relieving force, sent out from Valletta, was attacked on the way by the country-people who fired shots and threw stones from behind the walls of the fields. The troops, unable to get farther than Hamrun, returned to Valletta in disorder, followed up to the gates by a howling mob. At Burmola, the insurgents entered the fortifications and tried to oust the military; they had to retreat, but carried away with them eighty barrels of powder from the magazines.

When the first outburst of popular excitement died away, it became necessary to elect leaders to organise the defence and reduce the general chaos to order. At Notabile, the notary Emmanuele Vitale was chosen as a leader; at Attard, the notary Saverio Zarb, and at Zebbug, Canon Francesco Saverio Caruana. All these leaders at once directed that as many weapons as possible should be collected, and that all batteries and forts outside Valletta should be occupied and placed in a state of defence. By the 4th of September, some kind of order was established among the insurgents.

The notables of the Island assembled in the Palazzo Giuratale at Notabile, and a strong committee was elected to form a Provisional Government. Four representatives of the people were chosen:- Conte Salvatore Manduca, Marchese Vincenzo Depiro, Conte Ferdinando Teuma Castelletti, and Notary Emanuele Vitale. Vitale was also appointed Commander-in-Chief of the forces. Military commanders for the villages and officials of the new Government, such as secretaries, registrars, store-keepers, inspectors of fortifications, and food distributors were also duly appointed.

The people of Zebbug and Siggieui who had already selected their leaders, refused to take part in the Notabile elections, and Canon Caruana remained the military commander for the southern side of the Island as far as Hamrun. Under the direction of Vincenzo Borg, known to the people as "Braret", who proved a resourceful leader throughout the campaign, a strong battery was raised at Birkirkara to command the Fort Manuel road.

On the 7th Sept., Vaubois sent a deputation, composed chiefly of ecclesiastics, to the people promising redress of all grievances and a complete amnesty if they gave up their

arms and approached the Government in a friendly spirit. This deputation was never allowed to return to Valletta.

The chief anxiety of the French was the lack of provisions. The troops were well armed and disciplined, and the fortifications of Valletta were strong enough to withstand any attack by a semi-organised crowd of civilians. Their only real danger was from the sea, for the French naval supremacy was no longer assured after the defeat of Aboukir. In a way, the rising of the Maltese was a godsend to the French whose commander declared that it gave him a better chance of withstanding a siege, as it relieved him of the burden of provisioning the population.

The Maltese, meanwhile, were doing their utmost to make the siege effective. Cannons taken from outlying forts and disused batteries were mounted opposite the fortifications and on the main roads. Every available bit of lead was requisitioned for making bullets, the leaded windows and the water pipes of S. Antonio gardens being the first to be utilised. Furniture was to be used as firewood, and mattresses, pillows, and all soft material, for the making of wadding.

The provisional Government appealed

for funds to the wealthy members of the community. Special loans were raised, each village pledging its lands and other private property for the purpose. The King of the two Sicilies, Suzerain of Malta, was then approached by the Provisional Government, who sent a long letter with an account of the rising and asked for a loan of foodstuffs and war material.

Several small ships were despatched to intercept the British fleet, known to be on its way back from Egypt. Nelson first heard of the Maltese insurrection when he reached Sicily. He despatched Captain Gage of the "Terpsichore" to Malta, on the 16th September, with an offer of help to the insurgents. In the meantime, De Niza, with a Portuguese squadron, appeared before Malta and, being approached by messangers from the Island, sent the Maltese a hundred and seventy muskets and promised to remain close at hand for any emergency. On the 23rd, Sir James Saumarez, on his way to Gibraltar, fell in with the Portuguese squadron and sent the Maltese muskets, cartridges and flints. On the 25th, he summoned Vaubois to surrender.

At Gozo, the people, informed of the Maltese revolt, declared their independence

as soon as the blockading squadron appeared before the Island, and taking up arms, forced the French to seek refuge in Fort Chambray. The garrison was harassed by armed peasants until the 27th October, when Captain Ball of H.M.S. 'Alexander' summoned the French to surrender. Lieutenant-Colonel Lockey, the commander of the French troops, capitulated and the prisoners were embarked on two English ships. The colours of the King of Naples were hoisted on the forts, and the Island was formally delivered up to local deputies who were speedily elected.

Meanwhile the French in Malta set themselves to prepare for a long siege. The first proposal of the Commissioner was to send out 30,000 of the citizens, keeping within the fortifications only those who could contribute to the defence of the place. This was not done at once, but people were sent out in batches from time to time, and over a thousand persons were expelled during the first three months of the siege. The poor and the weak were the first to go, the well-to-do being kept as long as they could contribute money and goods.

Vaubois found himself short of money as Bonaparte had taken large sums away with him. Silver, obtained from the churches, the

Palace, and the Monte di Pietà, was in part coined in dollars at the Mint of the Order and in part distributed in kind as payment, and the Maltese were forced to give great sums on a fictitious loan. (\*)

In spite of the blockade by the allied fleets, the French kept sending and receiving correspondence, and small craft were able, at intervals, to bring in cargoes of wine, meat and other provisions, but as time went on, the blockade became more and more strict and both provisions and correspondence were frequently stopped.

For the besiegers, the question of food supply was only a degree less alarming than for the besieged. The products of the soil were enough to feed the population, and wheat could not always be obtained from Sicily. Although the sea was free to the Maltese they had no money, and foreign merchants refused to give credit. The King of Naples proved but little inclined to help or even to promise efficient co-operation.

Finally Nelson bestirred himself, and through his authority, guns and ammunition were sent from Sicily on the 6th December 1798. In January 1799, Captain Ball, who

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\* See Appendix VIII.



commanded the blockading fleet, arranged with the Maltese commanders to attack Cottonera, whilst an attempt was to be made to capture Valletta helped by the Maltese within the walls. This plot failed and forty-five of the conspirators within the walls were shot on the Palace Square at Valletta.

The failure of this organised plot disheartened the besiegers and the assault on Cottonera had to be abandoned. The commander of the Maltese levies had small hope of leading their men to a successful attack. Their men were badly armed and badly fed, while the French were well armed and entrenched behind strong fortifications. The help rendered by the King of Naples was so slight that the Maltese, on the 7th February 1799, sent him a humble petition praying for permission to appeal formally to England for protection. The King agreed to the proposal and the Maltese asked Nelson to send an officer to direct land operations. Captain Ball was instructed to leave his ship, and to preside the meetings of the Maltese Congress.

The Maltese National Congress, which first met on the 11th February 1800, consisted of twenty-two representatives from the villages, the delegates of the Bishop, a judge



appointed by the Congress, and two secretaries. (\*) The official meeting place was the Palace of Sant'Antonio. The provisional Government at once took steps to distribute food to the people, to collect funds, to maintain order and to administer justice, for which purpose, the tribunals at Notabile were reconstituted. The military head-quarters office was the Palazzo San Giuseppe at Hamrun, (now Casa Leoni) and Canon Caruana was the chief adviser on military questions. This eminent ecclesiastic had absolute control over the people of Zebbug and of the neighbouring villages, and was the idol of the clergy all over the Inland. On the other hand, Emmanuele Vitale, a rival of the Canon, was backed by the people of Notabile, who would have preferred to see him at the head of military affairs. Vincenzo Borg, who commanded the forces round Birkirkara, his native village, was another capable leader, who spent a large fortune in the struggle of the Maltese for their freedom. The loyalty and devotion of these men were invaluable, and Captain Ball made the best of them during his leadership.

Both deputies and people were greatly

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(\*) See Appendix IX.

attached to Captain Ball who, under the direction of the Congress, issued laws and regulations as Governor of the Islands of Malta and Gozo, on behalf of the King of Naples, and exercised full military and civil powers. Sanitary and custom offices were established at Marsascirocco and Saint Paul's Bay, importation duties were fixed, and a loan was raised for military expenditure, on which five per cent interest was allowed.

The King of Naples was too busy about his own affairs to give much attention to Malta. Naples itself was taken by the French on the 22nd January and, though it was evacuated soon after, its fate still hung in the balance. The Maltese were unofficially informed from Sicily that Russia, England, and Naples, had entered into an agreement to occupy Malta with their respective troops until the declaration of a general peace, and that the Tsar was persuaded to co-operate by a secret undertaking that Malta should be finally handed over to him as protector of the Knights of St. John. Russia's joining the second coalition was, in fact, mainly due to the desire to uphold the "protectorship" of Malta. Paul I. had indeed shown great friendship to the Knights after their loss of Malta

and, in 1798, was declared Grandmaster, instead of Hompesch, by a number of Knights who had assembled at St. Petersburg.

Notwithstanding all these hopes in the air, the distress of the Maltese grew daily worse and worse. Food was scarce, and the men-at-arms were exhausted with constant watching and manoeuvring. Regular troops were repeatedly asked for by the British commander, but it was only after weeks of anxiety that a force of eight hundred men under General Graham landed at St. Paul's Bay, on the 6th December, 1799. General Graham's headquarters were first at St. Antonio, but later on were transferred to Gudja; and the British regiments were stationed at Zeitun and Axiak.

In addition to these two regiments, 400 marines and 1,500 Maltese regular soldiers were engaged in the blockade of Valletta, and 1,000 armed peasants could be depended upon to co-operate in a general attack. The Portuguese marines who had been landed to help the Maltese were re-embarked; the Portuguese ships, leaving Malta soon after, ceased to co-operate with Nelson in the blockade of the Island.

The scarcity of food was so keenly felt, that Sir Thomas Troubridge, who comman-

ded the blockading squadron, expressed his intention of withdrawing the British troops from the Island unless supplies were forthcoming, "The Island is without bread *in toto*," he wrote. "If we are not supplied with corn, I see nothing but to retreat". On the 1st January 1800, he again wrote to Nelson:—

"We are dying off fast from want... "We shall be obliged to leave the place for "want of provisions... I am not very tender-hearted, but really the distress here would, "if he could see it, even move a Neapolitan."

The Maltese, of course, fared worse than the troops, who were specially provided for. The local supply of wheat had been consumed and none could be obtained from Sicily or Naples. At one time, perceiving that it was useless to appeal for food to the Neapolitans and the Sicilians, Troubridge sent a ship to Girgenti and seized two vessels laden with corn. Famine was averted for the moment, but sickness had set in among both troops and people.

Through political intrigue, the 3,000 Russian soldiers promised for Malta were kept back; on the 4th of January 1800, they came as far as Messina, but from there they

proceeded to Corfu and never came near Malta.

In February 1800, Nelson and his new chief, Lord Keith, united their fleets, and sailed from Palermo for Malta with 12,000 troops. These were landed on the 16th, and on the following evening the British fleet fell in with the French squadron, sent from Toulon for the relief of Malta with 4,000 troops. An action followed; the French flagship and an armed transport were captured, but three corvettes managed to make good their escape. 2,000 French soldiers were captured and landed at Comino as prisoners of war.

The French garrison was much disturbed by the failure of the relief force, but they showed no outward signs of weakness, and replied with their usual haughtiness when asked to surrender.

Vaubois and Villeneuve now decided to send the "Guillaume Tell" to France with an appeal for further help. The ship was accordingly prepared for sea, and on the dark night of the 26th March, left the harbour with a fresh south-east wind.

Her departure was luckily discovered by the British who gave chase, and early next morning, three ships came up with the French

man-of-war and forced her to strike her colours. She was towed to Syracuse and completely dismantled, but, later on, was repaired and added to the British Navy as the "Malta."

Vaubois informed the French Government of the disaster in despatches carried by a naval officer who left Malta in a small vessel known as "speronara". He added that he would be obliged to give up the place in two months time if no help reached him before then.

The activity of the besieging forces under General Graham increased every day, but the British troops were too few to rush the strong defence works, and the officers were constantly in fear of a desperate sortie. Graham reported this to General Fox, who replied that no special risks must be run, and that the troops, if hard pressed, must be embarked at once. It was at this juncture decided to raise a battalion of Maltese soldiers paid out of the British treasury. Two companies were enrolled by the 2nd April and four more by May, 1800.

In April, 900 Neapolitan soldiers, under the command of General Fardella, landed in Malta and were quartered at Birkirkara. This raised the spirits of the besiegers and when Nelson called at Malta in May, with Sir W.



Hamilton, they were received with great rejoicings.

On the 8th June, a French brig, laden with foodstuffs, entered the Grand Harbour. The besieged garrison rejoiced at first, but it transpired that the supplies were scanty after all, and news from France very disheartening. It was clear that no further help could be looked for from the Republic.

Vaubois now began to turn the civil population out of Valletta, in spite of General Graham's protests. Perceiving that the enemy was hard pressed, the British commandant, published a spirited address to the Maltese by way of inducing them to take the fortifications by a general assault. (\*)

On his arrival at Minorca, Sir Ralph Abercromby, who in May had been appointed to the supreme command of the British military forces in the Mediterranean, despatched Major General Pigot to Malta with 1,500 men. The force disembarked at Marsascirocco on the 17th July, 1800.

On the 24th July, the French decided to play their last card. They manned two frigates, the "Diana" and the "Justice" and despatched them at dead of night to run

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(\*) See Appendix X.



the blockade, and so escape the fate which awaited the garrison. The "Diana" was captured early next day, but the "Justice" managed to reach France with tidings of the imminent fall of Valletta.

On the 21st August, the French Admiral despatched a small vessel to his Government with the information that the garrison could hold out no longer, and must strike their colours by the 5th of September if help was not forthcoming. On the 4th September, Vaubois informed General Graham that he was ready for the surrender of the fortress.

Graham entered Valletta with Captain Martin of H.M.S. "Northumberland", and met the French Commander. The articles of capitulation were then drafted and taken to Pigot for approval. They were signed on the 5th September by Vaubois, Pigot, Villeneuve and Captain Martin.

The provision of the act of capitulation were as follows:- The French garrison were to leave the fortress with the honours of war and forts Ricasoli and Tigné were to be delivered up to the British troops; British ships were to enter the harbour immediately; all artillery, ammunition, inventories, and public papers, were to be delivered to British officers; the members of the garrison were to

be considered as prisoners of war, and conducted to Toulon, not to serve against England until exchanged; the besieging army and the inhabitants of the Island were not to enter the fortifications until the French troops were embarked and out of sight of the harbour.

As soon as the act was signed, Vaubois and Villeneuve rode out of Valletta and became the guests of General Pigot at Casal Balzan.

By the 8th of September, the greater part of the French troops were on their way to Marseilles, and on that day, Captain Ball, as Governor of Malta, made his triumphal entry into Valletta. Attended by his lieutenant, Baron Francesco Gauci, and the Capitano di Verga, and followed by the Magistrates, the representatives of the villages, and all constituted authorities, he drove to the Church of Saint John, where thanksgiving prayers were sung. He then went to the Magisterial Palace, where he received the Bishop and the notables of Valletta. The people were not allowed into Valletta that day, but on the morrow the gates were opened and hundreds of anxious persons thronged in, in search of their property.

On the 11th of September, the Congress

which had so well fulfilled its duties during the siege, was dissolved, and the country battalions disbanded. On the 15th, General Graham left the Island on leave of absence.

During the French occupation of Valletta, gold and silver articles melted and cast into bars, were divided, stamped, and used as currency. A proclamation of Vaubois dated 24th April 1798 runs thus:-

“Le gouvernement paye avec des lingots d’or et d’argent. La valeur intrinsèque en est fixée avec la plus grande exactitude.

Les lingots sont recus comme monnaie suivant la valeur fixée par l’empreinte qui se trouve dessus”.

Only a few of the ingots mentioned in this proclamation have survived. The gold conis were of two sizes of which the larger ones did not exceed the value of 20 louis, and the smaller ones had a value of about 10 francs.

One specimen, preserved in the Valletta Museum, is rectangular, measuring 22 by 19 by 3 mms., and weighs 17.59 grammes. On one side it bears the arms of Valletta, a lion rampant in an oval, and, on the other, the value of the coins is indicated. The number “24” is stamped at one corner and the letters “I” at another. On two of the edges,

the figure of a lamb in an oval is stamped to prevent the clipping of the edges.

A silver ingot, preserved at the Valletta Museum, is a rectangular bar measuring 34 by 28 by 7 mms., and weighs 63.16 grammes. One side is stamped with a lion rampant in an oval and the other with the figures "3.4.6." in the centre, the number "13" at one end and the letter M at the other. One of the edges is stamped with a lamb in an oval.

The French Government had, before the siege of Valletta, struck silver dollars and half-dollars, from the dies of the Order with the bust of Hompesch. These coins are distinguished by a small dot either opposite the nose of the Grandmaster or under the bust.

## CHAPTER XVI.

**Captain Ball—Pigot—Oakes—Maitland—  
Hastings—Council of Government—  
Bouverie—Stuart. 1800—1847.**

The departure of the French from Malta left the Island's future still undecided as the coalition against France was growing weak. In 1801, Austria made a separate peace, and Naples and Russia followed suit. The Tsar did not, in abandoning the coalition, give up his claim to Malta, which had been offered him by the allies in trust for the Order of St. John. When, however, the Tsar died, in March 1801, his son and successor, Alexander I., declined the Magistracy of the Order.

Bonaparte was not averse from the idea of restoring Malta to the Knights, and after the death of Paul I. he made it known that he could consent to such restoration provided the fortifications of Malta were demolished. A preliminary treaty of peace between Great Britain and France was, accordingly, drawn

up on this basis, with the provision that Malta was to be placed under the protection of a third Power to be named in the final agreement. The preliminary treaty was signed in London on the 1st October 1801.

In Malta, meanwhile, a strong feeling had grown up in favour of the Islands remaining under British rule. Only a very small party desired the restoration of the Knights, and the partisans of the King of Naples were thwarted by the armistice forced upon Naples by France in February 1808. Those who favoured British rule had been encouraged by the action of Sir Ralph Abercromby who, on his return to Malta in November 1800, had instructed General Pigot to consider the Maltese as being under the protection of Great Britain, and not to allow the pretensions of any other sovereign, or body of men, to be brought forward or discussed. He had, moreover, directed Captain Ball to take over the civil Government and to hoist the British flag in all places in Malta and Gozo where colours were usually displayed.

Sir Ralph Abercromby fell near Alexandria on the 21st March 1801. His remains were brought to Malta on the 9th April 1801, and interred with great pomp in a corner of one of the eastern ramparts of St.



Elmo, known to this day as Abercromby's bastion.

In February 1801, Captain Ball was recalled from Malta, but General Pigot, in announcing his departure on account of naval duties, assured the Maltese that no withdrawal of British rule was intended and that, in fact, his King was pleased to take the Maltese nation under his special protection. In May 1801, Pigot dismissed the Neapolitan troops under general Fardella and raised a Maltese regiment of militia.

This first Maltese regiment of militia numbered 900 men; the soldiers were supplied with musket, bayonet and pouch, and wore a jacket of home-made cotton cloth, with a leather shako and a red sash. The force was placed under the General Commanding in Malta from whom the officers of this regiment received their commission. In January 1802, Captain Vivian, inspector of troops, raised two other companies of Militia Coast Artillery, under the names of "St. Paul" and "Marsascirocco", which he distributed to the several batteries round the coast.

In May 1801, on the conclusion of the armistice between France and Naples, the Neapolitan troops were withdrawn from the



Island, and only the British remained. Shortly afterwards, Mr. Charles Cameron was appointed Civil Commissioner, and, in a proclamation published in July 1801, he reaffirmed the "paternal care and affection" of the Sovereign towards the Maltese. (\*)

The preliminary treaty of peace, placing Malta under a third power, came, therefore, as a great blow to the Maltese. Public meetings were held all over the Island, and a letter of protest was addressed to the Civil Commissioner. A great meeting of Maltese representatives further decided to send a deputation to London to present, if possible, their petition to the King in person. The following deputies were chosen:- Marchese Don Mario Testaferata, Filippo Castagna, Lieutenant of Burmola and Senglea, Don Emmanuele Riccardi and Don Pietro Mallia, priests, Michele Cachia engineer, and for Gozo, Antonio Mallia who had distinguished himself during the revolution. This deputation was accompanied by Antonio Casolani as confidential agent of the Government, and his clerk Eugenio Formosa. The party arrived in London on the 1st February 1802, but was not allowed to present the petition to

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(\*) See Appendix XI.

the King. The deputies, greatly disappointed, could do nothing but address letters to Lord Hobart.

Meanwhile, the final treaty of peace was being discussed at Amiens, and on the 27th March 1802, was duly signed. On the 20th April, Lord Hobart forwarded to the Maltese deputies the tenth article of the treaty by which the Islands of Malta, Gozo, and Comino were restored to the Order of St. John on the same conditions as they were held before the war, but under the protection of Great Britain, France, Austria, Spain and Russia, with a garrison of 2,000 troops to be furnished by the King of Naples.

The Treaty of Amiens seemed to put an end to the hopes of the Maltese; during the revolution, they had reverted to their popular institutions, the most important of which was the *Consiglio Popolare*, but there was little chance of their being allowed to retain these institutions under the rule of the Knights.

To everybody's surprise, the provisions of the Treaty were never carried out. A new Grandmaster, the Bailiff Fra G.B. Tommasi, was appointed by the Pope on the 9th February 1803, and the Bailiff Buzi was sent to Malta as a Minister Plenipotentiary of

the Order. Great Britain appointed Captain Sir Alexander Ball British envoy to the Order and sent him to Malta, early in 1803, with instructions to relieve Mr. Cameron of his functions as Civil Commissioner. It was quite clear, by this time, that Bonaparte did not intend to adhere to the Treaty of Amiens, and Ball was forced to return evasive answers to the representations of Buzi and of the French Minister who urged the immediate evacuation of Malta by the British, under the terms of the Treaty.

On the 16th May 1803, England declared war against France, and the Neapolitan garrison was ordered to leave Malta, whilst Sir Alexander Ball, created a Baronet in 1802, was instructed to take steps for the defence of the Island.

There was already in existence in Malta a local garrison, consisting of two battalions of infantry, under the Marquis Parisi and Count de Gatto respectively; one of artillery under Captain Vivian, and one of veterans under the Marquis Pandolfo Testaferrata. This force was raised in February 1803, under the terms of the treaty, superseding a regiment of Militia and two companies of Militia Coast Artillery, raised under British auspices in 1801. The infantry were dressed

in red, the artillery had dark blue coats with red facings and the veterans gray coats with red facings.

This force was now taken over by the British, and in 1805, an additional corps, "the Royal Malta Regiment," was raised, which saw active service in Calabria and Capri under Major Meade; this regiment was disbanded in 1811. In April 1807, a serious meeting broke out in a foreign regiment occupying Fort Ricasoli, a stirring event that was, for a long time, remembered in Malta. (\*)

In 1804, the famous English poet, philosopher, and literary critic, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, came to Malta as Secretary to the Government. By this time he had already made his mark in the world, and *The Ancient Mariner*, his most popular poem, is a good sample of his creative faculty. Unfortunately he only remained in Malta ten months.

In 1809, Lord Byron, the author of *Childe Harold*, spent a month in the Island he did not forget to mention in some of his literary works. He died in Greece on 1824, lamented by the Greek patriots whose benefactor he had been.

During the eleven eventful years that

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(\*) See Appendix XII.

followed, Malta remained, on the whole, contented under British rule, although there was a party strongly opposed to Sir Alexander Ball on the ground that he had refused to countenance the re-instatement of the "Consiglio Popolare." On the other hand, Ball instituted important reforms in the tribunals, in matters of public health and public order, and after his death, which took place at the Palace of S. Antonio, on the 25th October 1809, he was most sincerely mourned by the Maltese. Ball was buried in Fort St. Elmo, by the side of Abercromby and a monument was erected to his memory, by public subscription, in the Lower Barracca.

#### OAKES 1810-1813

On the death of Alexander Ball, Major Hildebrand Oakes, in command of the troops at Malta, was appointed Civil Commissioner in April 1810. During his period of office, the Maltese politicians renewed their agitation in favour of political reform and in June 1812, the British Government sent out from England a Commission to enquire into all matters touching the Civil Government, laws, revenue, etc. of the Islands.

During the sitting of this Commission, peace was signed between France and England,

and Napoleon was forced to abdicate. By the treaty of Paris of 1814, it was agreed that Malta and its dependencies should belong in full right and sovereignty to Great Britain.

In 1813, Malta was visited by a frightful outbreak of plague which lasted ten months, and in which 4,486 persons lost their lives. Other plague epidemics are known to have afflicted the Island in 1675, in 1655, in 1623 in 1592, and in 1519. In 1675, 11,300 persons died of the disease. It appears that the first cases of the 1813 epidemic were imported from Alexandria. The Government took stringent precautions to limit the spread of the disease. All places of public resort were closed and the Island was divided into districts and sub-districts, each guarded by a corps of volunteers who enforced sanitary measures. As the epidemic increased, people were not allowed to leave their houses except in case of necessity.

Hospitals and plague camps were set up close to the centres of infection, and even the Governor's Palace was used as an infirmary. Doctors and nurses carried aromatic herbs, camphor, and vinegar about their persons for their own protection. Disinfection was carried out by burning a special mixture,



used in all pest houses of the Levant, which gave foul stinking fumes.

Convicts were freed and employed on plague work as nurses, expurgators, and bearers, and cordons of troops were placed at Floriana, Zebbug, Birkirkara and Curmi.

It is interesting to note that it was then a common belief that cats, dogs and other domestic animals were dangerous during a plague epidemic, and that cleankept rooms remained free of infection. The doctors used to say that plague "seldom went upstairs, but stayed in cellars and damp rooms". These notions contained a truth proved a century later, as we know now that plague is spread by fleas and rats.

The city of Senglea remained free from the disease during the whole epidemic, and the inhabitants, believing in a heavenly protection, raised a monument to the Blessed Virgin in the principal square as a thanks giving for the blessing conferred upon them.

#### MAITLAND 1813-1824

On the 15th June 1813, General Sir Thomas Maitland was appointed to succeed Sir Hildebrand Oakes, with the title of Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Malta and its dependencies. Early in the following



year, he proclaimed the intention of the King of England to recognise the people of Malta and Gozo as subjects of the British Crown.

To Maitland, Malta owes many important reforms. He reconstructed the Civil, commercial and Criminal Courts, and introduced the system of trial by jury, employed for the first time in Malta in 1820 in the trial for piracy of the crew of the brig "William" of Liverpool. He abolished the so-called "Universities", or corporations for the administration of local commercial affairs, which dated from the fifteenth century, substituting for them a Government Commission empowered to supervise the food supply; the Treasury department took over the functions of the jurats. The Commission of food supplies, rendered obsolete by the declaration of free trade in corn, was abolished in 1822. Under the protection of a first-class sea power, the food supply was practically assured, and the Government thought it well to encourage private enterprise.

The imperious mandates and the stern strong will of Sir Thomas Maitland made him known in the Island as "King Tom", but his firmness, disliked as it was by a section of the community, went well with the ability that marked his administration.

Being entrusted with the government of the Ionian Islands, he was often absent from Malta when the senior Military officer governed in his stead.

During Maitland's term of office, English was formally declared to be the official language of the Government, and the use of Italian in official correspondence was discontinued. Thenceforth, no one was to be admitted as advocate, notary or law procurator, who could not write and speak English; all petitions to the Government and contracts with it were to be drawn up in English. In filling vacancies in the Civil Establishment, preference was also to be given to those acquainted with the English language.

In April 1818, George III instituted the Order of St. Michael and St. George to commemorate the passing of the Island of Malta and the Ionian Islands under British rule. Sir Thomas Maitland, who was also High Commissioner of the Ionian Islands, was nominated Grandmaster of the Order, at the first investiture held at the Palace of Corfu in November 1818. In the United States of the Ionian Islands the following islands were included: Corfu, Cephalonia, Zante, Santa Maura, Itaca, Paxo and Cerigo. The first investiture for Malta took place in

the Throne Hall of the Governor's Palace, on the 16th December 1818, when Doctor Giuseppe Borg Olivier, President of the Court of appeal, was invested with the Grand Cross, and Dr. Giuseppe Nicolò Zammit, one of the Judges, was made Knight Commander of the Order.

The following were created members of the Most Distinguished Order before 1842:

1818—Sir Raff: Crispino Xerri, member of the Superior Council of Justice in Malta.

1832—Sir Giuseppe Calcedonio Debono M.S.C.J in Malta.

1833—Marquis Sir G. Testaferrata, Lord Lieutenant of Malta.

“ Sir Vincent Casolani.

“ Conte Sir Vinc: Manduca.

1835—Sir Claudio Vinc: Bonnici

1836—Conte Sir Paolo Parisio, Lord Lieut. of Malta.

“ Sir Ignazio Bonavita, President of the Court of Appeal.

1839—Lt. General Count Sir Francis Rivarola.

Sir Thomas Maitland died in Malta on the 17th. January 1824 and was buried in the Upper Barracca where a simple stone monument marks his resting place.

## HASTINGS 1824-1826

Maitland was succeeded by the Marquis of Hastings who landed in Malta on the 7th June 1824. He had been formerly Governor General of India, a genial, kind hearted man, who, together with his wife, became very popular among the Maltese gentry they very freely and cordially entertained at the Palace.

During his term of office, Hastings instituted the Council of the University, and modified the courses of higher studies on the lines suggested by a commission appointed by his predecessor. With a view to helping home industries he converted the "Conservatorio" at Floriana into a "Casa d'Industria", in which a number of girls were taught spinning, lace making, needlework, etc; he also tried to revive the silk industry which had flourished for a time in the reign of Pinto.

Hastings succeeded in persuading foreign Governments to withdraw, on certain conditions, the strict quarantine restrictions imposed on ships from Malta after the plague of 1813, that were proving disastrous to the commerce of this Island.

The increasing population had already become an alarming problem in 1826. The

Governor thought that the newly acquired Ionian Islands would be a favourable place where to send the redundant population of Malta thus utilising their industry in developing the fertile lands that were scantily inhabited.

The project was generally approved, and in a short time, 278 people, attended by a chaplain and a medical man, were sent to Cephalonia.

In November 1826, Hastings fell ill. Advised to go to Naples for a change of air, he got worse during the voyage and died on board the ship. His remains were brought back and buried opposite St John's Cavalier in Valletta, now known as "Hastings Gardens" where a fine marble monument was raised to his memory.

#### PONSONBY 1827-1836

Following the death of Lord Hastings, Major General F.C. Ponsonby, at that time Commander-in-chief of the troops at Corfu, was, in Feb: 1827, sent to Malta as a Lieut. Governor. During his long tenure of office (1827-1836), Ponsonby was very often away from Malta, when the senior officer in charge of troops for the time being acted in his stead. (\*) Col. Sir Frederick Hankey,

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(\*) See Appendix XX.

the chief Secretary, managed to keep a firm hand on the government and effected radical improvements in the administration which were, however, not always appreciated by the people.

In October 1827, the British, French, Russian, Dutch and Swedish ships, after defeating the Turco-Egyptian fleet at Navarino, assembled at Malta where they vied with each other in giving costly entertainments and in subscribing large sums for charitable purposes; on one occasion, a collection among the crews on behalf of the poor of the Islands, brought in a sum of 7,132 scudi. The liberality of the Russians, in particular, was so striking at a time, that it gave umbrage to the British who could hardly compete with their friends in their lavish entertainments and mad expenditure.

This unexpected visit was a godsend to the Island, which had not yet fully recovered from the misery caused by the plague epidemic of 1813.

The battle of Navarino showed the want of a good naval hospital in Malta. Most of the numerous patients brought in the war-ship were accommodated in Fort Ricasoli. The place was so unsuitable that the British Navy



realised, as it had never done before, that Malta had to be provided with a first class hospital. Bighi hospital was the result. The headland between the creeks of Rinella and Calcara was formerly occupied by the little church of S. Salvatore, and the house of the Prior of Capua, Fra. Giov. Bichi, a nephew of Pope Alexander VII, hence the name of the place.

The Admiralty acquired the site and laid the foundations of a model Hospital. In 1830, whilst digging the first trenches, some early Egyptian stelae were discovered, now preserved in the British Museum.

The Maltese had repeatedly asked the Home Government to grant them a voice in the local administration, and after numerous petitions, in May 1855, a Council of Government was granted. This first Council was to consist of seven persons besides the Governor, or Officer administering the Island, who presided. Four members were to be holders of office in the Island or its dependencies, two were to be chosen by the Lieutenant-Governor from among the chief Maltese landed proprietors and merchants, and one from the principal merchants of British birth. The Council was to enjoy freedom of



debate and to vote on all matters of public concern brought before it. (\*)

The first members of the Council were:— Lieutenant-Colonel Cardew, the officer administering the Government during the absence of the Lieutenant-Governor; the Archbishop Bishop, Dr. Francesco Saverio Caruana, Lieutenant-Colonel Henry Balneavis, C.M.G., Commanding the Land Forces, Sir John Stoddart, Chief Justice, Colonel Frederick Hankey, G.C.M.C., Chief Secretary to the Government, Giuseppe Maria de Piro, a prominent landowner, Agostino Portelli, merchant, Nicholas John Aspinall, a British born subject.

To the Maltese, this Council did not appear as a representative body, and five months later, Mr. Giorgio Mitrovich was sent to London entrusted with a petition to Parliament, signed by 11,712 persons asking for an extension of political freedom. A Royal Commission was appointed to enquire into the matter. The Commissioners, Mr. John Austen and Mr. George Cornwall Lewis, arrived in Malta in October 1836, when Sir Frederick Ponsonby's term of office had already expired.

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(\*) See Appendix XIII.

Ponsonby's administration is associated with important changes in ecclesiastical jurisdiction, in the course of which, the right of asylum in churches, enjoyed by criminals, was abolished, and the clergy were made subject to the jurisdiction of the lay Court in temporal matters. It happened also that the question of appointments to the See of Malta, a moot-point that awaited solution for a good number of years, was finally settled during his term of office. The suzerainty over Malta, exercised by the King of Naples and Sicily, carried with it the right of nomination of the Bishop who was dependent on the Metropolitan See of Palermo. At the death of Bishop Labini in 1807, the British Government had tried to obtain the nomination of Canon Caruana, but King Ferdinand III. opposed the nomination. The Pope found a way out of the difficult situation by appointing a Maltese priest, Ferdinando Mattei. When Mattei died in 1829, the British Government again submitted the name of Canon Caruana. The situation by this time had become clearer, and in February 1831, Gregory XVI nominated Canon Caruana, Bishop of Malta. He further decreed that the Church and Bishopric of the Island should no longer be dependent upon the See of

Palermo but should be subject directly to the Holy See.

Up to the year 1828, criminals taking refuge in a church were considered to be beyond the jurisdiction of the civil law, and many a culprit escaped a just punishment in this simple way. This right of refuge in churches was, by proclamation, abolished in 1828, and numerous small chapels in the country have had, since that date, the inscription "*Non gode l'immunità ecclesiastica*" stuck near the doorway.

Anxious to befriend the country people, the Governor tried to introduce in Malta the cultivation of the cochineal insect, which yields a valuable dye, at the time much in vogue; the experiment proved unsuccessful, for, in spite of every precaution, the imported stock quickly perished.

The following notice was published in the Government Gazette of 23rd January 1828: "With a view to encourage and promote the well-being of the inhabitants of these possessions, the *cochineal* or *grana fina* of America has been lately introduced into these Islands. It is now reared in the gardens of the Palace of St. Antonio under the direction and superintendence of Signor Ledelonso Ximenes and George

"Bish, and at Zeitun, under the care of Don Luigi Camilleri. Plantations of the Indian fig should be found in the Government gardens of each Casal to demonstrate the rearing of the insect to the country people."

In November 1831, Sir Walter Scott visited Malta spending fifteen days at the Beverley Hotel at Valletta, which stood on the site of the present St. Paul's Buildings in Sda. Ponente. In his correspondence, Sir Walter refers to Malta as "an Island like no other in the world". In 1832, the great French author Lamartine stayed eight days in the Island, and was received with great cordiality by Sir Frederick Ponsonby. He was so pleased with his visit that he published a most favourable account of the impressions received in Malta.

In 1831, the circulation of the copper coins of the Order was stopped by Government Notice (5th Nov. 1831.) This inconvenienced the public to a great extent; although British coins were on the market after this date, the people continued to use the terms, *rbighei* (tari) *carlin*, *cinquina*, *habba* as heretofore.

The Musta people, accepting the proposal of the architect Grognet de Vassè, decided to build a fine temple as their parish

Church, and on the 5th June 1833, the first stone of the famous "Rotunda" was laid amidst popular rejoycings.

In 1836, whilst at home on leave, Ponsonby, resigned his appointment, and soon afterwards died. His many friends, genuinely grieved at his loss, erected a monument to his memory on one of the bastions overlooking Marsamuscetto Harbour. This monument, a column 70 feet high, at the lower end of Strada Britannica, was struck by lightning in January 1874; its base was rebuilt not far from the original site, on the same bastion, overlooking the sea.

### BOUVERIE 1836-1843

On the 18th Nov. 1836, Major General Sir Henry Frederick Bouverie, appointed Governor and Commander-in-chief, arrived in Malta.

Weary of the Hankey administration, the people of Valletta gave a splendid welcome to the new Governor who soon got busy to work out the reforms suggested by the Royal Commission.

The Commission had recommended that the custom tariff should be simplified, but

that the taxes on articles of general consumption should remain unaltered.

The University courses were divided into four Faculties: Philosophy and Arts, Theology, Jurisprudence, and Medicine, and placed under the direction of a Special Council of the University. A Statute was drawn up for the University and the Lyceum; and the Rector of the University was made responsible for public education; the number of public schools was increased and made free.

In 1842, the Public Library was removed from the control of the Rector of the University and placed under a Librarian assisted by a Committee of Management.

Censorship of the press, which had been very strict up to this time, was abolished by the Commission, leaving the Press Law of 1839 to provide against abuses.

For administrative purposes, Malta was to be divided into seven districts, each under the jurisdiction of a Syndic to act as Magistrate and Chief police officer. The old Quarantine Department, whose function was to prevent the spread of infectious diseases, was given greater powers, under the new title of "Department of Quarantine and Marine Police".

A properly equipped Police Force was



to be created, and the regiment known as the "Royal Malta Fencibles", which had so far done police duty, had to be disbanded. This regiment was paid out of local funds, and cost about £12,000 a year, yet its abolition was resented, and petitions were drawn up asking that it should be retained. The Home Government agreed to keep the regiment for garrison duty, and at the same time, relieved the Maltese of the burden of its expense. Colours were presented to the Regiment by the Governor, on the 14th November 1838, Lieutenant-Colonel the Marquis De Piro being in command. From May 1840 onwards, the the English language was substituted for Italian in all orders, regulations, and reports concerning the regiment.

In 1837, William IV of England died and was succeeded by his niece the Princess Victoria. The proclamation of Queen Victoria's accession took place in Malta in June 1837 amidst great rejoicings.

In January of the following year, Adelaide, the Queen Dowager, paid a visit to Malta. During a stay of three months, she became endeared to the population. Before leaving, in 1839, she laid the foundation stone of the Collegiate Church of St. Paul at



Valletta, in Piazza Celsi, erected at her own expense, and at the cost of £18,000.

In 1840, the Hajar Kim ruins, to the west of Krendi, were explored by Mr. Vance of the Royal Engineers, under the auspices of the Governor, and an illustrated report of the excavations was published in the "Malta Penny Magazine".

In 1842, Bouverie invested Agostino Randon, LL.D., one of Her Majesty's judges, and a number of the Supreme Council of Justice, with the insignia of Grand Cross of St. Michael and St. George (G.C.M.G.) and Baron Giuseppe Maria De Piro, a member of the Council of Government, with that of Knight Commander, (K.C.M.G.). On the same occasion, Baron Azzopardi was created a Companion of the Order (C.M.G.).

The last years of Bouverie's rule were marked by a bitter controversy between the Government and a political party anxious to see the Jesuits return to Malta in charge of their old college. The preaching of a popular Jesuit, Father Ryllo, attracted great crowds to the churches. Impressed by the questions of the day, his sermons were so full of political views displeasing to the authorities, that the Bishop was left no alternative but to suspend the preacher. Soon

after, an Italian priest, Canon Camillo Mapei, published a strong defence of Father Ryllo, for which he was ordered by the Police to leave the Island. The local press was violently drawn into the controversy, and a petition got up for Father Ryllo's reinstatement, and signed by over a thousand persons, was laid before the Governor. The case was submitted to the Colonial Office, but Lord Stanley, in a despatch to Bouverie, of July 1842, saw no reason for the removal of the restrictions imposed by the Bishop of Malta. Father Ryllo had, in the meantime, left Malta to take up missionary work in Africa; he was murdered at Khartoum in 1848.

This Jesuit father was a great favourite at Rome for his excavations at Mosul, and for the fine collection of antiquities, now in the Vatican, he had presented to Pope Gregory VI in 1838.

The anti-slavery movement, so powerful in England at this time, spread even to Malta, and in July 1842, Bouverie presided a meeting of influential citizens who formed themselves into a Society, known as the "Anglo-Maltese auxiliary Association to the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society".

On the 21st March 1842, a census of the Maltese Islands showed a total popu-

lation of 114,499, of whom 1161 were of British birth and 838 foreigners.

In 1842, Sir Henry Bouverie resigned his appointment and returned to England, but a petition signed by thousands of the inhabitants of Malta praying for his reappointment was submitted to the Queen. This appeal was gracefully entertained and the Governor returned for a further period, retiring finally in June 1843.

Bouverie was a very popular Governor, much respected for the courage he displayed during a cholera epidemic that ravaged the Island between June and October 1837, when he daily risked infection by visiting the stricken villages and the hospitals. He also gave much attention to public works, caused country roads to be constructed and repaired, and extended the Grand Harbour to the part now called the Marsa. The people appreciated the good work of Bouverie and on his final departure from Valletta, the bastions were black with crowds waving their hats and handkerchiefs to wish him godspeed.

## STUART 1843-1847

Bouverie's successor, General Sir Patrick Stuart, arrived at Malta on the 14th July 1843. Stuart was a man of sound judgment, conscientious and punctual in the discharge of his duties, but an avowed puritan and therefore not likely to be popular with the masses. His term of office, in fact, was marked by much political and religious unrest. The reforms advocated by the Royal Commission of 1836, had not proved entirely satisfactory, and many of them were bitterly opposed by the people. The new programmes of studies for the Elementary Schools and the University, were also violently discussed. This caused Father O'Malley, the Rector of the University, who had taken part in the controversy, to resign, and Mr. W. H. Butt was appointed in his stead.

One political party was still strongly contending for the establishment of the Jesuit college, alleging that the instruction given in the public schools was insufficient. Another party, supported by some of the local papers, demanded a strict Roman Catholic education, at the time when a

certain number of Protestant schools were being opened in the Island.

In 1845, a Collegiate School was opened at St. Julian's for Protestant settlers in Malta, and for British residents in India. Lord Ashley was Chairman of the Committee in charge of the School, of which the curriculum included English, Latin, Greek, German, French, Italian, modern Greek and Arabic. The School flourished for some time, but, in the long run, it did not prove a success.

Another English school with more modest aims, was opened in Valletta by Professor Lawson under the name of the "Melita House Academy".

The Party that advocated the return of the Society of Jesus was able to secure the sympathy of Lord Stanley, and in 1845, the Jesuit Fathers were authorised to open a college at Notabile which was promptly attended by eighty pupils.

The abolition of the strict press censorship gave an impetus to newspaper publication, and in eight years, fifty-two papers made their appearance (\*) of which, however only a few survived their first year. The

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(\*) See Appendix XIV.

majority were written in Italian, but the more pretentious had their leading articles both in Italian and English; of the latter, the "Illuminator" with a strong denominational bias, was the most violent.

Much disturbance occurred in 1843, set on foot by the simple act of the Bishop making a separate parish of the suburb of Floriana. This apparently harmless measure was strongly opposed by a section of the people of Valletta who tried to prevent the separation by fair means or foul. It was a long time before the disturbance thus created died down.

A different sort of grievance was violently aired at the time. The value of the different silver dollars in the Island came to be fixed by law at four shillings and two pence. Up to this time, dollars of Sicily, Spain, Mexico and other South American States, had been legal currency, but had different values fixed by local bankers. The Government measure of equalising the value of the dollars met with the fierce opposition from the commercial community, as some of the dollars differed in intrinsic value and a lot of money was made on the rate of exchange. The outcry was kept up so long that in 1845, it became necessary to issue a fresh pro-



clamation fixing the value of the Sicilian dollar at four shillings only. The old coins of the Order of St. John were, at this time, being gradually withdrawn from circulation by the Government.

The increase of the population and the frequent droughts, brought the question of water supplies strongly before the Government. Public water tanks were repaired and increased in number and the Fawwara aqueduct, devised by Bouverie, was brought to completion and formally inaugurated in 1845 by Lady Stuart.

Other public works were also taken in hand; the main road between Pietà and Sliema was constructed in the same year, and a rearrangement of the marble slabs in St John's Cathedral in their present state, took place.

The importance of Malta as a Naval base was growing so rapidly that up to date docks became a necessity. Extensive works were planned in 1815, but little was done before 1841. On the Queen's birthday of 1844, Sir Patrick laid the first stone of a new dock which was formally opened in 1848.

Two distinguished men died in Malta during Sir Patrick Stuart's term of office;



Cardinal Fabrizio Sceberras Testaferrata di Cicione, a Maltese ecclesiastic, secretary to the Sacred Congregation of Bishops, and Bishop of Sinigaglia, who died in 1843, and Mr. Hookham Frere a famous English scholar and a most charitable gentleman, who died in 1845, in his villa at Pietà where he had lived for a quarter of a century.

After an eventful and, on the whole, successful governorship, Sir Patrick Stuart came to grief over a paltry detail about the Carnival festivities, which brought him great unpopularity and no end of annoyance. Since the early days of the Knights, the people were allowed to spend the four days preceeding Ash Wednesday in mirth and revelry, which gave them a brief relaxation from the iron rule of the Order. To this periodical merry-making, the Maltese were deeply attached. Nobody had, so far, objected to this practice, but Sir Patrick Stuart, a strict Sabbatarian, disliked giving official sanction for the wearing of masks and for the revelry on a Sunday, and in 1846, when the usual licence to hold Carnival was granted, the Governor had it limited to three days, omitting Sunday.

This prohibition caused great discontent, and on Carnival Sunday, despondent and growling crowds paraded the streets of Valletta.

At sunset, when the drums of the 42nd Regiment assembled on the Palace Square to beat the usual retreat, a crowd of youngsters hemmed them in and forced them to disperse. The police soon restored order, and the incident would have been forgotten had it not been taken up by the politicians and the press. A petition enumerating old and recent grievances was submitted to the Queen with a prayer that the civil administration of the Islands be, in future, entrusted to a civil governor.

In July 1847, on a plea of being refused leave of absence, Sir Patrick resigned his appointment and left the Island. Colonel Mildmay Fane, the senior military officer, assumed the government pending the appointment of Stuart's successor.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### **Richard More O'Ferrall—Sir William Reid 1847-1858**

O'FERRAL 1847-1851

The great desire of the Maltese, at that time, was that Her Majesty's Government should send to Malta an officer to take command of the garrison and a civilian, preferably a Catholic, to be at the head of the civil administration.

The persistent demand of the population could no longer be ignored when the press in England represented the wish of the Maltese as both natural and reasonable. It was difficult, for a time, to find a suitable person to fill the high and difficult post, but a gentleman of experience and wisdom was discovered in the person of the Right Honourable Richard More O'Ferrall who had sat in Parliament as member for County Longford, had been one of the Lords of the Treasury and was a Catholic.

O'Ferrall landed in Malta on the 18th December 1847 and received a royal welcome from the crowds who assembled to greet their first civil Governor. Valletta was gorgeously decorated with flags and triumphal arches, and, on the night of Sunday the 19th, a great illumination attracted the country people to the town. Bands played in the streets and a large mass of youthful singers serenaded the Governor in front of the Palace. A more flattering reception can hardly be imagined.

The new Governor was well pleased with such a welcome and did his best to live up to the people's expectations by improving Government institutions and promoting the welfare of the Island. He fixed three days a week on which to receive persons wishing to speak to him on business matters, and took a personal interest in the many problems of local Government.

The important despatch of November 1846, clearly shows the intention of the Colonial Office in making this appointment. (\*)

It is deplorable that O'Ferrall attempted his reforms at a time when mistrust and

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(\*) Appendix XV.

incredulity were in the air, and Europe was ablaze with revolutionary outbreaks. The growing unrest in the neighbouring Island excited the people of Malta who read with avidity the local and the Sicilian papers teeming with disaffection and hatred towards all governing authorities.

In the same year, the Monarchy was wrecked in France, and, in February, Louis Philippe left Paris in the hands of an angry population who lost no time in proclaiming a Republic.

The proclamation of Sicilian independence irritated the King of Naples who despatched his navy and a good portion of his army to crush the rebellion. Messina was bombarded and taken in 1848, Catania was reoccupied in 1849, and Syracuse capitulated soon after. The Sicilians who had taken part in the rebellion, had to flee the country and found Malta a convenient shelter. Over 600 of them landed at Valletta together with some of the leaders, including Ruggiero Settimo, the president of the old government. The amnesty granted by the king of Naples in May 1849, caused the bulk of the refugees to sail back to Sicily, but some of the leaders who were excluded from the Royal pardon remained in the Island.

The wave of revolt did not spare the Papal states. A strong republican party succeeded in getting the upper hand at Rome, and Pius IX, fearing for his life, left Rome for Gaeta in November 1848. On the 20th January 1849, a republican constitution was proclaimed in Rome.

The new French Republic, under the presidency of Louis Napoleon, befriended the Pope and sent against the Romans an expeditionary force which entered the city on the 2nd July 1849. The temporal power of the Pope was restored, for the time being, and Pius IX returned to Rome in May 1850.

The people of Malta could not but follow these events with deep interest, and the local press was full of passionate articles for or against the political movements. Those papers that befriended the Sicilian revolution were opposed to kingly governments in general, and reviled King Ferdinand, the Pope, and all their supporters, including the local clergy and the local authorities. The other papers cursed revolutions and reforms and tried to apply to Malta the great lessons already learned on the Continent.

In Malta, O'Ferrall and his officials shared, with the Pope and other sovereigns, the hatred of the Radicals; local papers like

the "Mediterraneo", "L'Avvenire", the "Malta Mail" and the "Malta Times", saw nothing but evil in the administration of the Civil Governor, not merely because he tried to reform the Government, but also because he was a Catholic. Papers of opposite views such as the "Portafoglio" and "L'Ordine", were as noisy as their rivals though in the opposite direction.

These circumstances should be taken into account in order to understand why O'Ferrall found so much difficulty in making his reforms acceptable. The economies effected in various Government departments, the restrictions imposed on Charitable Institutions, and the increase of the rents of government houses, beneficial as they were, were denounced as crimes by the so called "patriotic" press, and even an epidemic of cholera, that raged for a few months in the Island, was attributed to the misgovernment of O'Ferrall. A storm of protest was raised in 1850, when 150 Roman refugees were not allowed to land in the Island. The Colonial Secretary was communicated with and the question was even raised and debated in the Home Parliament.

All this turmoil did not prevent the Governor from ruling with a firm hand. Letters Patent of the 11th May 1849 gave



the Government Council of Malta power to make laws for the peace and good Government of the Islands. The Council, as reformed, was to be composed of eighteen persons, nine of whom were to be appointed by Her Majesty and eight to be elected, every five years, by the electorate of Malta and Gozo. The Governor presided the Council and had a casting vote. The first general election, after the promulgation of the Constitution, took place in August 1849, when the following representatives were returned to the Council:-

Giuseppe Pulis Montebello, merchant.

Rev. Don Filippo Amato, D.D.

Michelangelo Xerri, merchant.

Rev. Mons. D. Annetto Casolani, D.D.,  
Bishop of Mauricastro.

Rev. Mons D. Leopoldo Fiteni, D.D.

Arcangelo Pullicino, M.D.

Giovanni Battista Vella.

Adriano Dingli, LL.D., for Gozo.

The first session of the new Council was opened on the 8th January 1850, and important Ordinances were passed. The Prison Ordinance (1st September 1849) came into force as soon as the building of a new prison on the Corradino Hill was complete, the old galley-slave prison, opposite the Lower

Barracca in Valletta, having proved inadequate as a modern jail.

The mercantile community, wishing to have a building in which to transact business, applied for the grant of a strip of land in Valletta. The Government proposed to give up the space along the side of St. John's Church in Strada Reale, opposite the Auberge d'Auvergne, but happily the violent opposition raised by the public prevented the encumbrance of this site. A plot of ground was, later on, granted for the Borsa in Sda. Reale between Strada Vescovo and Strada Cristoforo.

The many facilities accorded to the members of the mercantile community by the Governor were so much appreciated that in 1874, a marble tablet was fixed in the Exchange building which reads as follows:—

AD ONORE  
DEL M. O. RICHARD MORE O'FERRALL.  
PRIMO GOVERNATORE CIVILE DI MALTA,  
AMMINISTRATORE PROVIDENTE, INTEGERRIMO,  
IL QUALE RIFORMÒ IL NOSTRO  
CONSIGLIO DI GOVERNO  
INTRODUCENDOVÌ  
LA RAPPRESENTANZA POPOLARE  
COLMÒ QUESTO PAESE DI UTILI ISTITUZIONI,  
E PER MEZZO DELLE CEDOLE DOGANALI

E COLL'AUMENTO DE' LUOGHI DI DEPOSITO  
NE FECE PROSPERARE LA MERCATURA ED IL  
TRAFFICO.

LA CAMERA DI COMMERCIO  
DA LUI LEGALMENTE COSTITUITA  
QUAL TESTIMONIO DI PERENNE RICONOSCENZA,  
QUESTA MEMORIALE LAPIDE DEPOSE L'ANNO  
MDCCCLXXIV.

Translation:—

"In honour the Rt. Honble. Richard More O'Ferrall first Civil Governor of Malta, a scrupulous and provident administrator who reformed the Council of Government, introduced popular representation and enriched the country by useful institutions. To enhance commercial prosperity and develop trade, he adopted the Custom House Schedules and increased the number of warehouses. The Chamber of Commerce, to which he gave legal standing, put up this tablet in 1874 as a token of perennial gratitude."

In 1850, the President of the Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Agostino Portelli, was created a Knight Commander of Saint Michael and Saint George, and on the same date, Mr. W. H. Thornton, the Auditor of accounts, and Mr. William Sim, the Assistant Chief Secretary, were appointed Companions of the same Order.

A portrait of O'Ferrall, painted by Mr. Giuseppe Calli, hangs in the Committee room of the Valletta Exchange.

In the early days of O'Ferrall's administration, the Augustinian Fathers of Valletta opened a school for the education of poor children. The father superior, Fra Gaetano Pace Forno, afterwards Bishop of Malta, took great pains to ensure the success of this school which has survived to these days.

Bishop Caruana, who ruled the Church in Malta for sixteen years, died on the 17th November 1847, at the age of 89, just before the arrival of O'Ferrall; he was succeeded by Monsignor Publio Maria Sant.

Under the auspices of the Governor, several industries were started in the Islands. A factory for making shot for sporting guns was opened at Casal Paula in 1850, and one for making beaver and silk hats was started at Vittoriosa. In 1851, a paper factory was erected at the Marsa by the two brothers Tonna, and the first photographic establishment, for the making of daguerreotypes, was opened in Valletta at No.62, Strada Reale.

In 1851, disappointed at the persistent and increasing opposition, O'Ferrall asked to be relieved of his duties. This was a great disappointment to a large section of the

community who tried to induce the Governor not to persist in his resignation, and who even petitioned Her Majesty to have the Governor retained.

The enemies of O'Ferrall spread the rumour that he had been recalled in consequence of his treatment of the Roman refugees. This assertion received a flat contradiction from Earl Grey, the Colonial Secretary, who, in a despatch dated 9th March 1851, in reply to the Governor's request to leave the service said:-

"In conveying to you the Queen's permission to leave the Island before the arrival of your successor, I am commanded to express Her Majesty's approbation of your services which I consider to entitle you to the gratitude of the people of Malta. The many important reforms you had effected in the legal and administrative institutions of the Islands have already greatly contributed to its improvement and will, I feel confident, prove to be the foundation of great and durable prosperity.

"The effective reforms of the Charitable Institutions of a community in which the munificent foundations both of past and present times, peculiarly required to be thus guided and organised, the improve-

"ment effected almost simultaneously and in  
 "course of a very few years, in the Sanitary  
 "and Commercial arrangements, in prison  
 "discipline and in public Works, the intro-  
 "duction of the representative element into  
 "the legislature, effected with the mainte-  
 "nance of a perfect order in a crisis of great  
 "political changes among surrounding nations,  
 "these are only some of the results of Mr.  
 "O'Ferrall's government of Malta which gained  
 "for him Her Majesty's highest approbation  
 "and which cause his administration long  
 "to be remembered with gratitude by the  
 "people of that Island.

In another despatch, dated 8th April  
 1851, in answer to a petition signed by over  
 200 persons, requesting that the Governor  
 be allowed to retain his office for a longer  
 period, Earl Grey eulogised O'Ferrall and  
 concluded by saying:-

"I greatly regret that the ground of  
 "impaired health on which Mr. More O'Fer-  
 "rall seeks for retirement puts it out of my  
 "power to comply with the wishes of the  
 "memorialists by urging him any further  
 "than I have already done to remain longer  
 "at his post".

O'Ferrall left Malta on the 13th May  
 1851, leaving General Robert Ellice to act



as Lieutenant Governor. On his arrival in Ireland, O'Ferrall was elected a member of Parliament for County Longford and took an active part in political life in the interest of his constituency.

### SIR WILLIAM REID 1851 - 1858

O'Ferrall's successor was Sir William Reid, an officer with a most distinguished military career. As a young lieutenant under Wellington, he fought at Torres Vedras and in the siege of Badajos. He took part in the operations against Ciudad Rodrigo and distinguished himself in the actions of Salamanca, San Sebastian, Toulouse, New Orleans, Paris, and Algiers, being twice wounded in action. In 1831, he embarked for the West Indies where, after witnessing some severe storms, he set himself to discover the laws governing the tempests that cause such deadly havoc in tropical countries. In 1828, he published in a volume the result of these scientific observations but, by that time, he had been given command of a brigade of infantry and sent to Spain where he fought, was wounded, obtained the grade of lieutenant colonel and was made Companion of the Bath. In 1839, he was elected a fellow of the Royal



Society and was appointed Governor of Bermuda. In 1846, he was transferred to Barbados as Governor-in-chief of the Windward Islands. In 1849, he returned to England and resumed his military duties as Officer Commanding the Royal Engineers at Woolwich. In the same year, he was made Vice-President of the Royal Society, and two years later a Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath. In 1851, he was sent to Malta.

Equipped with experience and scientific knowledge, Reid turned at once his mind to the educational problems of the Island and to the development of industries and agriculture.

The first public questions that came up for discussion during Reid's rule, was that of the establishment of a local Militia. An Ordinance was drafted and brought before the Council having in view the formation of a corps raised on the principle of the old Deima, or permanent army, first established under the rule of Lascaris. The Ordinance which amounted, practically, to compulsory service, met at the outset with strong opposition. Dr. G. B. Vella, one of the elected members, opposed it in the Council in a violent speech and resigned his

seat soon after. The compulsory clause in the Ordinance was subsequently removed, and the corps was formed of volunteers who joined in great numbers from all parts of the Island.

In May 1852, Baron Sir Giuseppe Maria de Piro was appointed Captain Commandant of the Maltese Militia, and at the same time a member of the Council of Government instead of the purveyor of Charities and Comptroller of Contracts who, up to the 12th of April 1852, had occupied a seat in the Council as one of the nine official members. On the resignation of Dr. G. B. Vella, Mr. Rosario Messina was elected to the Council, and on the death of Canon Fiteni and the resignation of Mr. Pulis Montebello, Dr. Ignazio Schembri and the lawyer Mr. John Griffiths occupied chairs in the Council Chamber. A year later, Mr. Messina resigned his seat, and Mr. G. B. Vella was re-elected in his stead.

Sir William Reid occupied himself mainly in raising the standard of local arts and industries. He instituted scientific societies over which he presided in person. With a view of encouraging agriculture, he offered, in 1854, a portion the Boschetto gardens to the Agricultural Society for an

annual show, to be held in the month of June on the popular feast day of Saint Peter and Saint Paul. As from the time of the Order a great illumination (luminaria) took place on that day, this feast came to be known by the name of *Li Mnaria* (the illumination).

In 1853, the main gate of Valletta, known originally as Porta di San Giorgio, and later as Porta Reale, was enlarged and re-constructed. The foundation stone was laid on the 28th June 1853 by the Governor, and a scroll was laid under the stone with statistics of Malta and Gozo. In the same year, the narrow defile between Valletta and Floriana, known as Porta di Sant' Anna, was enlarged for the convenience of the growing traffic. The gate was completely pulled down at the beginning of the 20th century. The main road between Valletta and Sliema, through Misida creek, was laid down at this time and, in Gozo, the lighthouse on the top of "Tal Giurdan" hill was erected. This lighthouse is 400 feet above sea level, and its light is visible from a distance of 24 miles. The Delimara lighthouse 148 feet above sea level, was constructed in 1855.

In December of the same year, Sir

Ignazio Bonavita, the president of the Court of Appeal, retired and Dr. Paolo Dingli was installed in his place, Dr. Antonio Micallef, the Crown advocate, being nominated a Judge, and Dr. Adriano Dingli, Crown Advocate in his stead.

The nomination of Dr. Adriano Dingli to the position of Crown Advocate is an important event in our history, for from this date the Government of the Island may be considered to have passed practically into the hands of this gifted laywer. The seat of representative of Gozo in the Council, vacated by Dingli was, in February 1854, filled by Dr. Paolo Sciortino.

A general election took place in October 1854, when the following members, were returned to the Council:—

Canon Dr. Filippo Amato.

Mr. Salvatore Naudi L.L.D.

Mons. A. Casolani, Bishop of Mauricastro.

Judge Dr. Giacomo Pantaleone Bruno.

Sir Ignazio Bonavita, G.C.M.G., LL.D.

Canon Dr. Emmanuele Rossignaud.

Prof. Rev. Dr. Salvatore Cumbo.

Rev. Dr. Paolo Pullicino.

Mr. Paolo Sciortino, LL.D. (for Gozo)

The elections of Cumbo and Pullicino were subsequently declared to be void, the

two gentlemen having polled the same number of votes. At a by-election which followed, Mr. Michelangelo Xerri, merchant, was returned.

In 1853, when the Crimean War broke out, the Island became a centre of great commercial activity.

This war waged against Russia by Turkey, assisted by Great Britain and France, lasted three years.

Troops and war material were landed daily in Malta, on their way to and from the Black Sea. Three regiments of the Guards, a Battalion of the line, besides other units, were quartered in the Island for a long period. The fall of Sebastopol in 1855, was celebrated with great rejoicings in Malta, and with a general illumination on the night of the 29th September.

When peace was declared in 1856, the homeward-bound troops kept our harbours busy for many months. Three regiments of mercenary troops, called the Anglo-Italian Legion, were landed in Malta on their way to Russia. The soldiers in this corps were the scum of southern Europe and in their impatience to go to the front, they vented their temper on the Maltese in a long series

of brawls and quarrels. In one of these rows a police Inspector was stabbed and an excited mob followed the rowdy soldiers to Fort Manoel where they were stationed. British troops were called out and peace was restored, but for a long time, a regiment of cavalry had to be stationed outside Fort Manoel and two men-of-war, the "Hannibal" and the "Spiteful", moored in the Marsamuscetto Harbour, had their guns ready for any emergency. The Anglo-Italian Legion was soon after disbanded.

On the 16th October 1855, Mr. Victor Houlton, private secretary to Sir W. Molesworth, the Colonial Minister, was appointed Chief Secretary to the Malta Government, a post which he held for nearly thirty years. Dr. Antonio Micallef, one of Her Majesty's Judges, was made an official member of the Council of Government, when Admiral Houston Stewart resigned; Sir Ignazio G. Bonavita resigned his seat in the Council in April 1855, when Mr. Giorgio Mitrovitch, a local merchant, was elected in his stead.

An investiture was held at the Palace in February 1856, when the following decorations were conferred:—

G.C.M.G.

His Excellency Sir William Reid.



Sir Ignazio G. Bonavita, late President  
of the Court of Appeal.

Baron Giuseppe Maria De Piro.

K.C.M.G.

Dr. Paolo Dingli, President of the  
Court of Appeal.

Mr. W. H. Thornton, Auditor.

Dr. Adriano Dingli, Crown Advocate.

Captain Giacomo Tagliaferro, Commander of the Malta Militia and, later on, Mr. G. B. Schembri, Captain of the Militia, were created Companions of the Order of Saint Michael and Saint George.

In 1856, Mr. Antonio Schembri, a local merchant and Consul for Belgium in Malta, was elected to the Legislative Council, but his election was subsequently declared void as he had sworn allegiance to a foreign Government. Mr. Mitrovitch resigned his seat in the Council in July of the same year, and Dr. Gaetano Laferla was elected in his stead.

The practice of electing judges in his Majesty's Court to the Council of Government, was brought to an end in 1857, when Letters Patent were published declaring judges to be ineligible to the Legislative Council. In consequence of this, Judges Micallef and Bruno left the Council, and Mr. Joseph B.H. Collings, inspector of Char-



itable Institutions, and Baron Pietro Paolo Galea, were elected in their stead.

Letters Patent excluding ecclesiastics, of any creed or denomination, from the Council of Government, were published on the 2nd of October 1857. This harsh step was taken by Her Majesty's Government in consequence of the uncompromising attitude assumed by the ecclesiastics in Council over the drafting of the penal code. The Roman Catholic Religion had been described therein as the "dominant Religion" but when the penal code was approved by Her Majesty's Government the article relating to Religion was omitted. A despatch of the Colonial Secretary had already made it clear that the Home Government was not prepared to allow the use of the phrase "dominant religion" in the law. The despatch said:

"Her Majesty's Government cannot advise Her Majesty to sanction the portion of the code in question while the Roman Catholic Church be designated in it as "dominant... They are at the same time willing to take into consideration any other term which may be suggested expressive of the fact that the Roman Catholic Religion is that of which the rights are guaranteed by the fundamental law of Malta, but not

“conveying the notion of domination or “supremacy”.

The Valletta Exchange, or the “Borsa di Commercio”, known as “le stanze”, up to the time of Sir William Reid, was originally installed in the ground floor of the Jesuit college, now the Lyceum, with an entrance in Sda. San Paolo.

In 1857, the present building in Sda. Reale, taken in hand in 1854, was brought to completion and inaugurated under the chairmanship of Mr. John Grant, a British merchant. The architect was Mr. Joseph Bonavia.

In 1854, a Vice-Admiralty Court was established in Malta, with the following officials: President, Dr. Paolo Dingli; Commissioner, Dr. Ignazio Schembri; Marshal, Captain W. Lindquist, Agent for the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company. The Actuary and Registrar was Notary W. J. Stevens, Junior.

Cholera, which for a time was prevalent in many European countries, broke out in Malta during the month of July 1854. Fortunately, the epidemic was a mild one and lasted about three months, during which 348 deaths were registered.

In 1857, Fra Gaetano Pace Forno, an

Augustinian Monk, was created Bishop of Ebron "in partibus" and nominated as co-adjutor to Bishop Sant with the right of succession. Three months later, Bishop Sant resigned the See, and on the 10th December of the same year, Monsignor Pace Forno was confirmed in the Bishopric.

During the Governorship of Sir William Reid, the construction, in 1854, of Fort Lascaris, under the Upper Baracca, was taken in hand. This entailed the demolition of a portion of the Sultan's garden and the picturesque house of the Superintendent of the Port, which over-looked the harbour, just above the Custom House. The "Ta Braxia" Protestant Cemetery outside Porte des Bombes, was opened in 1857.

In 1856, an earthquake shook the Island with some violence causing great alarm but no great damage.

Sir William Reid left Malta in the spring of 1858, regretted by all, political opposition having greatly relaxed during his tenure of office. Stirring events, such as the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny, evidently, engaged the minds of the people more than local political questions.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### **Gaspard Le Marchant—Storkes—Grant 1858—1872**

General Sir John Gaspard Le Marchant, appointed on the 10th April 1858 to succeed Sir W. Ried, landed in Malta on the 29th of the same month. The new Governor, like his predecessor, united in his person the two offices of Civil Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the troops in these Islands.

Le Marchant proved to be a hard-working man and a reformer who took an interest in nearly all Government Departments. Public works, however, had an irresistible attraction for him. He planned new roads and buildings, and gave personal attention to the minutest detail of their construction.

His first act was to replace many of the coat of arms of the Knights of the Order removed by the French and by Maitland. He ordered trees to be planted in public roads and squares, and in Valletta,

he turned Piazza Tesoreria, the square to the west of the Palace, into an orange grove enclosed by an elaborate iron railing, with a fountain on the left and a coffee house on the right. A monument was needed as a finishing touch to the trim little garden. A life-size bronze statue of Grand Master Manoel de Vilhena stood in the square of the fort on Manoel Island to commemorate his gift to the Order of the stately fort built for the defence of the Marsamuscetto harbour. Believing that this statue would make a better show in his orange grove, in 1858, Le Marchant had it transported to Valletta. In 1887, the statue of Vilhena was removed to the head of the Maglio garden, at Floriana, to make place for a marble effigy of Queen Victoria.

The bronze Neptune that graced Wignacourt's fountain at the Marina fish-market, was removed to the main yard of the Governor's Palace in Valletta. A noble balustrade that enclosed the space in front of St. John's Church was removed and replaced by a shrubbery. The small square on the Strada Reale side of St John's Church was planted with trees and, for its centre, a small pyramidal granite fountain was ordered in England.

The Grand Master's Palace was overhauled, repaired and refurnished. The corridors were paved with marble and the Ambassador's room was lined with gilded ornaments and mirrors. The armoury was also rearranged and decorated.

An old shabby market behind the Palace in Strada Mercanti, an eyesore and a reproach to any administration, was swept away and a new market erected in its stead which serves its purpose up to the present day.

With the idea of centralising the administration, Le Marchant caused the more important public offices to be installed in the ground floor of the Palace.

The Charitable Institutions were not overlooked, for radical reforms were effected in the Poor House at Floriana, the Hospital for Incurables, the Orphan Asylum and the Central Hospital. The new Lunatic Asylum, half way between Attard and Notabile, commenced under the administration of Sir William Reid, was completed in 1861 and on the 16th of July, 250 patients were conveyed to the new building. Up to that time, the lunatics had been crowded into a house at Floriana known as "Villa Franconi", used

for that purpose since the time of Sir Henry Bouverie.

The Grand Master's palace at Notabile, adjoining the Gran Corte Capitanale was, at this time, adopted as a Sanatorium for convalescent soldiers. It is now used as a hospital for tubercular patients, under the name of "Connaught Hospital" formally opened by King Edward VII in 1909.

A very important work, began in 1859 and carried out under the administration of Le Marchant, was the clearing of the old marshes of the Marsa and the extension of the Grand Harbour. This important work rendered extensive commercial operations possible in stormy weather.

With a view to encouraging extramural burial, a new Catholic Cemetery was planned, in 1862, on the hill called "Tal Horr" to the south of the Marsa. This cemetery, completed in 1872, under the able direction of the architect Emmanuele L. Galzia, then Superintendent of the Public Works Department, now covers the northern slope of the hill, and with its thousands of trees has become a landmark in the country.

Towards the end of Le Marchant's administration, a new Opera House was erected in Strada Reale, the old theatre built



by Manoel De Vilhena having proved insufficient for the growing population. The new building was designed by Mr. E. M. Barry, the architect of the Covent Garden Opera House in London. It was commenced in 1860 and completed in 1866, at a cost of over £25,000. The construction of the new theatre involved the pulling down of large blocks of houses between Porta Reale and Strada Mezzodi.

The long-felt want for the proper lighting of Valletta was met in 1861 by the formation of the Malta and Mediterranean Gas Company, with a capital of £60,000. Gas works had already been erected in Valletta on a modest scale, and when Prince Alfred Duke of Edinburgh, the second son of Queen Victoria, paid a visit to the Island of Malta in the "Euryalus," gas was installed in the Palace for the first time (1858).

Other important public works during the Governorship of Le Marchant were the construction of the road from Hamrun to the Marsa (Via Croce della Marsa in 1860), the erection of an iron shed at the Marina, and a new set of grain stores (fosse) excavated at Floriana (1861). A monument to Sir Thomas Maitland was erected at the Upper Barracca in 1863.

Several Royal Personages visited Malta during Le Marchant's administration. Prince Alfred of Edinburgh landed in 1858 and was given a royal welcome by the whole population. On December 27th, Valletta was gorgeously illuminated, and the Casino della Borsa gave a ball in honour of the Prince. The Empress of Austria entered the Grand Harbour in the "Victoria and Albert" on the 13th May 1861, but did not land. On the 5th of June 1862, the Prince of Wales landed in the Island and was magnificently welcomed; he visited the Casino della Borsa on the 7th June.

In December 1860, the Maltese regiment known as the "Royal Malta Fencibles" was converted into an auxiliary corps and called the "Royal Malta Fencible Artillery".

The Auberge d'Italie, formerly used as a civil arsenal, was, on the 22nd September 1859, together with several storehouses in Strada Britannica transferred to the Military Department in exchange for the Pinto Stores near the advanced Marina Gate.

Palazzo Spinola, a spacious and airy building at St. Julian's, built by the Knight Spinola, of the Order of St. John, was, in 1860, taken on long lease by the Military

Authorities and converted into a general Hospital, named after Dr. Forrest, the Principal Medical Officer of the garrison. Extensive barracks were also constructed at Saint George's Bay, called "Pembroke Camp" as a compliment to the then Minister for war.

In 1860, an attempt was made to establish a first-class English college in Malta. It was called the "Malta Protestant College", instituted in a spacious building on the Sliema side of St. Julian's. Twelve languages were taught by a first class staff, and of 60 boys who formed the first batch of students, seventeen received their education, clothes and board free. Unfortunately, the name given to this institute made it unpopular with the Maltese so that, although the college flourished for a number of years, it was mostly attended by English boys. It would, undoubtedly, have been of great advantage to the population had it not been so openly denominational in character.

Another English school opened in Valletta, in connection with the Free Church of Scotland, was not shunned by the Maltese, and its teachers proved to be very good educationists. In 1860, the head master was Mr.

Hugh Gavin, appointed by the Colonial Committee in Edinburgh; he had been Rector of the Johnstone Academy, and succeeded the Rev. George Wilson.

During the Governorship of Le Marchant the population showed great confidence in the administration, and being prosperous, they complained very little.

Great political events were taking place at this time in Italy where the people had once more asserted their right to freedom. Many distinguished Italians, fleeing from their oppressors, had settled in these Islands, and a number of famous writers and politicians made Valletta their home for many years, and were a great factor in the development of the Italian language among the Maltese gentry. The young towns-people could not but sympathise with the great Italian teachers who freely diffused their ideas in the numerous Italian newspapers of Malta.

Don Ruggiero Settimo, Prince of Fitalia, the well-known politician who had raised the standard of revolt in Sicily, had settled as a resident in Valletta. He had formerly been a High Admiral of Sicily and, during the Revolution of 1848, was elected President of the Provisional Government. On the 19th December 1860, the veteran

patriot was presented with the Collar of the Annunziata by Chevalier Robert Slythe, Consul of His Majesty the King of Sardinia. In 1861, when Italian unity was accomplished, Don Ruggiero was elected President of the Upper House of the Italian Parliament. Unable, through failing health, to take his seat, he died in Valletta, at his residence in Strada Forni, on the 22nd May 1863, at the age of 85. His remains were claimed by the Italian Government and conveyed to Sicily by an Italian warship.

In 1862, the Island of Gozo was erected a separate Diocese, and on the 16th April 1863, Monsignor Butigieg, the first Bishop elect of Gozo, left for Rome to be consecrated by His Holiness.

A coral reef was discovered at this time between Malta and Gozo, at the depth of about 80 fathoms, not more than one-fourth of a mile off the Gozo shores. At one time, some fishermen brought up fine coral trees which were sold for £200. A similar discovery had been made at the time of Pinto, but as pink coral was not appreciated at the time, the fishing was abandoned. In Le Marchant's time, pink coral was in fashion, and many applied for fishing rights. The government granted an exclusive right to a certain

Michele Cresciuolo, a Neapolitan. In 1863, another coral reef was discovered at Gneina Bay and companies were formed for the purpose of exploiting it.

On the 3rd of August 1863, Le Marchant resigned the governorship. His popularity, which had grown steadily during the first years of his tenure of office, waned gradually and practically vanished by the time he left. Contemporary papers relate that not ten persons, besides Government officials, showed any sign of regret at his departure.

#### STORKES 1864-1867

Le Marchant's successor was General Sir Henry Storkes, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., who, since 1859, had been High Commissioner of the Ionian Islands, having succeeded Mr. Gladstone in that post.

The new Governor arrived in Malta on the 9th November 1864 in H.M.S. "Psyche" from Marseilles, the government having been administered, after the departure of Le Marchant, by General Ridley. He landed at noon on the 30th and drove to the Palace in civilian dress. The people, taking this as a recognition of their wish for a civil governor, gave Sir Henry a hearty welcome.



Everyone expected much of the new Governor, and the politicians who hoped for long-desired reforms convened public meetings and prepared an address in which a clear statement of the affairs of the Island was given.

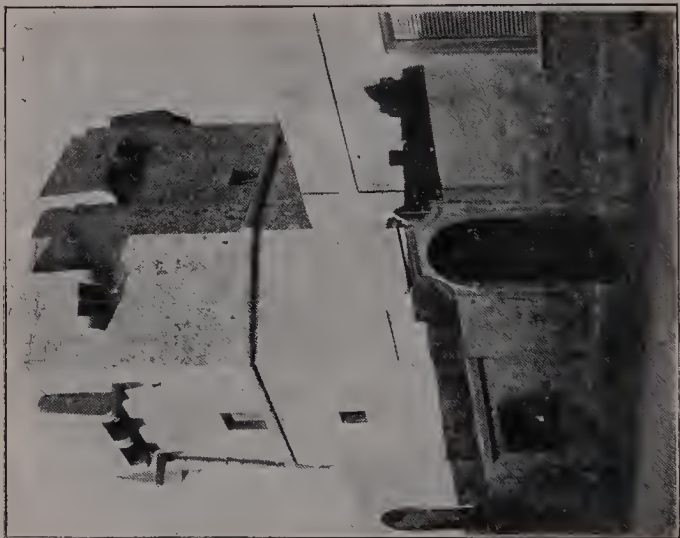
On the 3th of December, the Chamber of Commerce presented Storkes with a complimentary address, and, on the same day, a deputation of the politicians presented their much debated document in which the following reforms were advocated:—better representation in the Council; municipal institutions in the country; extension and improvement of public instruction; administration with equity and justice, as in other British colonies; better control of public property and finance, and encouragement of commerce and local industries. The deputation consisted of Sir Vincent Manduca Piscopo Macedonia, the very Rev. Canon Dr. E. Schembri, Dr. F. M. Torreggiani, Dr. Pasquale Mifsud, Dr. Felice Grech, Dr. St. John Edwards, Mr. M.A. Scerri, and Mr. Emilio Sciberras.

The Maltese Medical Society, called at the time "Medical Society of Encouragement", deputed the doctors Luigi Pisani, Alfonso Darmanin, Guglielmo Arpa, and





Monument to G. M. Perellos in St. John's Church



Medieval Tower at Krendi



Senglea Bastion—Built by the Knights of Malta

Giuseppe B. Sammut to read a complimentary address to the new Governor. Storkes showed great kindness to all these deputations and promised to study all the questions submitted to him. As a proof of his sincerity, the new Governor, on the 1st December 1864, issued a notice informing the public that he would receive at the Palace, every Tuesday, any person who wished to see him on business. The earnestness of Sir Henry Storkes was soon apparent in all branches of the service. A Government Notice of the 11th February 1865, appointed a Commission to enquire into Public Instruction as given in the Lyceum and the Primary Schools of Malta and Gozo. The Commissioners were Colonel Romer R.A., Inspector of the Army Schools, Mr. Emilio dei Baroni Sciberras, and Mr. Benjamin B. Baker, LL.D. The report of this Commission showed that public schools were in need of a thorough reform; although this did not take place during the governorship of Storkes, many improvements were introduced. A Lyceum was opened at Cospicua for the benefit of the students of the Three Cities.

Unfortunately, the Governor had not been six months in the Island before cholera,

then raging at Alexandria, broke out. The first cases, as usual, passed unobserved, but the epidemic was officially declared in July. One thousand eight hundred and seventy-three persons died during the epidemic which lasted four months, a clean bill of health being granted on the 17th November 1865.

The Governor, who was setting himself to understand the several Maltese problems, now received instructions to leave at once for London. He departed on the 17th December and, after spending a short time in England, was sent to Jamaica, where a rebellion had broken out among the natives. He was made president of a Royal Commission appointed to report on the affairs of Jamaica and had to act, *pro tempore*, as Governor of that Island.

A year later, on the 27th December 1866, Sir Henry was sent back to Malta, where he was received in triumph by the population. Congratulatory addresses were presented to him by eleven constituted bodies of the Island, the streets of Valletta were illuminated, and a number of festivities were given in his honour.

During the absence of Stokes from Malta, Major General William John Ridley administered the Government. This officer did

not show great tact and, very probably, Storke's enthusiastic reception was accorded mostly as a protest against Ridley's administration.

To students of geology and archaeology the governorship of Storke is a landmark, for the Malta Society of Archaeology, History and Natural Sciences was instituted, thanks to the exertion of a group of scientists led by Dr. Leith Adams, Surgeon of the first Battalion of the 22nd Regiment. Several fissures in the rocks were cleared and examined, and reports on fossil elephants, hippopotami, birds, etc., were published by the Society. (1865-1866)

An attempt was made by the Government to introduce the cultivation of oysters on a commercial basis, and a report on the subject was published in 1867 by Dr. Saverio Schembri, Rector of the University. In 1865, a Frenchman from the Island of Re in the Bay of Biscay, started three oyster beds, one at Marsascala, one at Marsascirocco and the third one at Ta-Xbiex, to the west of Manoel Island. The first two stations proved a total failure, as all the oysters disappeared in a very short time, but in the Sliema station they thrived and prospered. In the long run, however, the industry had to be abandoned.



Wishing to induce the population to take more interest in their local affairs, Storkes created, in 1867, a kind of Municipal Council in several districts. By Government Notice of the 31st January 1867, District Committees, consisting of five members, were created with the object of reporting to the head of the Government: first the needs of their district in the matter of the formation and the repair of roads, as well as improvements in the water supplies and in the sanitary conditions; secondly, any neglect in the execution of the law respecting the cleanliness of streets, and houses; thirdly, in the district near the sea, any neglect in the execution of the laws relative to fishing; fourthly, in the districts lighted at the expense of the Government, to supervise the contractors; and, lastly, to report upon any other subject on which the Committee might be consulted by the head of the Government. This venture in local administration was well received but, like the oyster beds, it did not thrive.

Many important public works were continued or taken in hand during this governorship. The harbour extension, which had been commenced in 1861, was brought to an end in November 1866. The work had given constant occupation to an average

of 300 men for a period of six years and added to the harbour about 80 acres of a land-locked basin in which ships could anchor in safety. During the dredging operations many objects of antiquity, such as marble columns, statues, earthenware amphorae and other vessels were brought to light. Stone fish ponds or baths were met with, and the remains of a large building were removed from the foot of the Corradino Hill. The reports upon these finds are unfortunately so scanty as to be of little use to students of archaeology.

The foundation stone of the Anglican Church of Sliema was laid by the Bishop of Gibraltar on the 13th September 1866. The church, in the early English style of architecture, was designed by the architect Mr. G. M. Hill of London and its building was supervised by Mr. Webster Paulson, the Civil Engineer, afterwards connected with the Public Works Department.

To the great regret of the population, Sir Henry Storkes resigned his appointment in February 1867. He left Malta on the 17th April, accompanied to the steamer by thousands of people who gave him a very warm send-off.

During his short tenure of office, Storkes



had been indefatigable in making himself acquainted with the wants of the inhabitants and in devising the best means of improving their condition. His anxious care and the wise measures enforced by him during the cholera epidemic, caused him to be looked upon as the father of the people.

### SIR PATRICK GRANT 1867-1872

General Ridley again governed the Island until the 15th May 1867, when Lieutenant General Sir Patrick Grant, G. C. B. arrived in Malta as the successor of Sir Henry Storkes. He was sworn in as Officer Administering the Government, but Letters Patent appointing him Governor of Malta and Commander-in-Chief were received shortly afterwards.

The most important question that Grant had to face was that of the public water supply. The year 1867 was marked by a very scanty rainfall, and the population was greatly alarmed, fearing a repetition of the severe drought of the years 1834-41. Mr. Scamp, the Deputy Director of Works of the Admiralty had, in 1843, reported at length on the water supply of the Island. A water famine was the more to be dreaded in 1867

as the population had grown considerably larger and water was used more freely since the last cholera epidemic. Several reports on the subject were published at this time both by the Government and by private parties.

In April, 1867, a report by Mr. Charles Andrews, the engineer, suggested means for increasing the water supply. An English firm of engineers, Messrs. Faucett & Company, also approached the Government on the subject. In February of the same year, Mr. Bateman, the water engineer, left London for Malta with instructions from the Duke of Buckingham to study the water supply of these Islands and to suggest means for its improvement. Bateman reported on the 11th May, suggesting that shafts should be sunk to sea level to catch the water in the soft stone. He thought the country unfavourable for surface reservoirs or dams, the rock being too porous to hold the water. The scanty rainfall also showed that it was better to be dependent on a supply drawn from the deep rocks than on surface collection. The rain for the last fifteen years had been scanty and irregular, the records given being as follows:—

1852	8.27 inches.
1855	15.70 „
1866	10.49 „
1867 to Apr,	2.30 „

Bateman suggested that a trial well, 12 feet by 6 feet, be dug to the north west of Casal Curmi at a distance of one mile and a half from the seashore, and at the same distance from the mains of Wignacourt's aqueduct at Casal Attard. He estimated the cost of this work, together with the necessary connection with the main aqueduct and the installation of a pumping station, at about £14,000 with an annual cost for maintenance of £1,200.

On the 28th June, the Governor called a meeting of the Council to discuss the various proposals made for the improvement of the water supply. A scheme to search for water, both in the high ground beyond Notabile and in the low ground to the west of the Marsa was approved and at once taken in hand. As a further precaution, condensers were ordered from England which could at short notice distil sea-water; the old tanks, dug at the time of the Order, were cleaned out and repaired. In less than two years, 110 shafts were sunk to the west of Notabile and connected with galleries 9,860

feet in length, at a depth varying from 40 to 110 feet. These new galleries added 250,000 gallons of water to the 537,000 yielded daily by the springs made use of at the time of the Knights. In the Marsa district, shafts were sunk and at the end of 1867, 432,480 gallons a day of a slightly brackish though palatable water were pumped. Owing to the abundant rainfall of 1866, the water question was no longer a pressing one, although a cholera epidemic in 1867, demonstrated the importance of a good and abundant water supply. The first cases were reported at the Lazzaretto among refugees from Tunis and Sicily, and suspicious cases were observed soon after among the men of a British regiment at Pembroke Barracks. A sharp outbreak occurred in Saint Dominic's Convent at Valletta in September, when ten out of twenty-six friars were attacked. The epidemic proved, however, to be a mild and short one, for a clean bill of health was issued on the 28th October 1867.

The strenuous efforts of both citizens and officials, during the cholera epidemics of this and the preceding years, and the great activity displayed in political circles, may well account for the remarkable number of honours bestowed on the Queen's birthday in 1868.

On this occasion the Governor, Sir Victor Houlton, the Chief Secretary, and Sir Adrian Dingli, were promoted to the Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George (G.C.M.G.) Major General William John Ridley, senior Member of the Council, Commanding the Infantry Brigade, Count Niccolò Sciberras Bologna, and Baron Pasquale Sciberras Trigona, were promoted to be Knights Commanders of the same Order (K.C.M.G.) and Messrs. Giovanni Vella, the Collector of Customs, Ferdinando Inglott, the Comptroller of Charitable Institutions, and Alfred Christian, the President of the Chamber of Commerce, were made Companions (C.M.G.).

The gate known as "Porte des Bombes" was enlarged, in 1868, under the direction of Colonel Durnford, Commanding the Royal Engineers. This gate originally admitted only one vehicle at a time, and had become, therefore, a hindrance to the increasing traffic. In the same year (September 14th), an explosion occurred, at 9 a.m., in the laboratory of Fort Sant Angelo, causing the death of six men of the Royal Artillery and a breakage of glass for miles round, to the great alarm of the population of Vittoriosa.

Before 1869, there was no racing ground

on which the members of the Jockey Club could run their horses, and occasional meetings were therefore held on the Notabile road as in the time of the Order. Grounds were acquired at the Marsa at this time, and the first race meeting took place there in 1869.

Political unrest began to be felt about this time as evinced by the numerous letters in the local papers and by the petitions and the despatches to the Home Government. But the Letters Patent amending the Constitution, issued in 1870, eased the situation. Eighteen members were to form the new Council of Government with the Governor as President. The heads of the principal Civil Departments and the Senior Military Officer of the Garrison constituted the nine official members of the Council, of whom two could be ecclesiastics. This reform was well received by the population, and the first general election took place in June 1870.

The public mind was in those days engrossed by the stirring events happening in Central Europe. War against Prussia was declared by France on the 15th July 1870, and, on the 20th September, Rome was taken by assault by the Italian troops. A section of the Maltese



population was greatly concerned at this last event, as it was feared that the Sovereign Pontiff would be much embarrassed by the loss of his temporal power. A petition, signed by 10,536 persons, was submitted to the Queen, praying that Her Majesty's Government might intervene in order to secure the independence of the Holy See, and to support its right to the Roman States. Another petition signed by 7,195 persons, was sent to the British Parliament, in support of the temporal power of the Pope. The Earl of Kimberly replied, on the 17th December, that "Her Majesty had not interfered in civil affairs on former occasions, nor could she now so interfere. At the same time Her Majesty's Government had not failed to take such steps as were in their power to afford the Pope the means of security in case of need". It was a common belief for many years, that the Pope had been offered a residence in Malta in case of necessity and, as a demonstration of the attachment of the Maltese to the Holy See, solemn festivities were held in the Island on the 16th, 17th and 18th June 1871, on the occasion of the 25th year of the pontificate of Pius IX.

The opening of the Suez Canal, on



November 17th 1869, was a most important event which engaged the attention of the commercial section of the community. Great hopes were built upon the opening of the new route as many vessels were expected to call at Malta on their way to and from the Suez Canal. The probability of an increase of sea traffic showed at once the necessity of a dockyard of some sort in Malta for the repair of mercantile shipping, and a company was soon formed in London under the name of the Anglo-Maltese Hydraulic Dock Company Limited, with a capital of £150,000. The prospectus of the Company was issued on the 15th August 1869.

The prosperity of the Island had increased during the administration of Sir Patrick Grant, and many important public works were taken in hand.

On the 13th June 1869, the first stone of the church of Saint Gaetano at Hamrun was laid by the Bishop Monsignor G. Pace Forno. The architect was Dr. George Schinas who, later on, became Superintendent of the Public Works Department. The Church was consecrated on the 11th July 1875.

A new Royal Naval Dock was opened with great ceremony, on the 16th February 1871, by Vice Admiral Sir Hastings Yelverton

the Commander-in-Chief. This dock, designed in 1864, was called Somerset Dock, in honour of the Duke of Somerset, then first Lord of the Admiralty.

In the same year, extensive works were commenced by the Royal Engineers on Corradino Hill for the protection of the Dock Yard and for the construction of water reservoirs. These works incidentally caused the destruction of several megalithic monuments, the surface of Corradino, or Kortin hill, being covered with remains of the late Stone Age.

With a view to encourage the cultivation of trees in Malta, the Governor proposed that a sum of £1000 be voted annually for a period of ten years, and in June 1870, a committee was appointed, made up of the Collector of Land Revenue, Dr. G. C. Delicata, Professor of Natural History, Mr. A. Schembri, President of the Agrarian Society and Mr. Alfred Christian. To solve several agricultural problems, in September of the same year, an agrarian society was started in Gozo under the name of "Società Gozitana d'Incoraggiamento", Dr. Guglielmo Rapinet, then an elected member of the Council of Government, being the first President.

A fresh attempt was made to cultivate the

cochineal insect but the experiment failed as completely as that of 1828.

In February 1871, in rebuilding a bastion at Fort Sant Elmo, the Royal Engineers, laid bare the vault containing the remains of Sir Alexander Ball. The coffin of Sir Ralph Abercromby was found a few weeks later. It is hard to understand how the graves of two such important personages could have been forgotten in less than twenty years. The coffins of the two distinguished officers were re-cased and laid in a new vault behind the old one.

It is pleasant to find it recorded that in 1871 an old Maltese emigrant, Mr. Lewis Scickluna, who left the Island in 1830, paid a visit to his native land. The papers of Ontario contained articles very complimentary to Mr. Scicluna, who had established himself at St. Catherine's, Ontario, as a ship-builder, amassing a large fortune and earning for himself a high character for honesty, integrity and talent in his profession. In 1874, when Lord Dufferin, the Governor General, made an official tour of the Dominion of Canada, he complimented Mr. Shickluna on a magnificent arch he had raised in his honour, representing the shipbuilding industry on the Canadian lakes of which he was the

pioneer. The firm of Scickluna had by that time built 120 vesssels.

Sir Patrick Grant left the Island on leave on the 30th June, and Major General Sir Alfred Horsford, K.C.B. was appointed officer administering the Government. The Governor returned in November, but at a special meeting of the Council of Government, on the 25th of April 1872, he announced his intention of relinquishing the reins of Government he had held for about five years. His address on this occasion concluded with the following words; —

“ I take upon myself to say that a more  
“ loyal, well affected, industrious, well-con-  
“ ducted population than that of these Islands,  
“ our Honoured Sovereign, I am well con-  
“ vinced, does not possess, throughout Her  
“ Majesty’s widespread dominions on which  
“ the sun never sets. ”

The Council, addressing the Governor, repaid in full his complimentary remarks.—

“ You have earned ”, they said “ the earnest  
“ gratitude of the elected members for the  
“ strict justice with which you have uni-  
“ formly administered the affairs of these  
“ Islands during your five years’ tenure of the  
“ Government. We are specially grateful also  
“ for the strict attention you have unremit-

“tingly given to the conduct of the public  
“business of Malta as also for the urbanity  
“and the courtesy with which you have  
“treated all those whose duty or business  
“have brought them in contact with yourself”.

No Governor has left Malta more deservedly regretted and respected by the population than Sir Patrick Grant who, on the 3rd June, 1872, sailed in H.M.S. “Helicon”.

## CHAPTER XIX

### **Van Straubenzee — Borton 1872 - 1882**

A distinguished Crimean officer was selected to succeed Sir Patrick Grant, General Sir Charles Thomas Van Straubenzee, K.C.B., who had already known Malta when in Command of the Buffs. The new Governor arrived in Malta on the 1st June 1871. The total population then was 141,775 of whom 69,952 were males and 71,823 females. There were also 849 English residents, not including the army and the navy, and 1,910 foreigners.

No great political troubles marked the new administration, though the elected members of the Council of Government showed great activity during that period. The most controversial subjects discussed were: the question of emigration, the despatch of the Secretary of State limiting the powers of the elected members in Council, the educa-

tion question, the corn tax, and the drainage of the Island.

The choice of the drainage system for the Island, an apparently innocent question, was destined to bring in its train complications and difficulties undreamt of by the Government.

In regard to emigration, the Government had, as early as 1865, tried to induce Turkey to favour Maltese settlements in North Africa, but the conditions laid down by that Power were far from being acceptable. The emigrants were required to renounce their nationality and become Ottoman subjects, by taking the oath of allegiance to the Turkish Sultan.

The need of providing employment for the working classes having become more urgent, the emigration question came to the fore again in 1872. The disposal of the unemployed was debated in Council at great length in February of that year, and schemes were drawn up in favour of the emigration of Maltese workmen to North Africa (especially Cyrene) and to Jamaica.

The Government thought that Jamaica would be a desirable home for Maltese colonists, and after a lengthy correspondence with the Governor of that Island and with



some of its leading employers of labour, a law in favour of Maltese immigration was passed by the Jamaica Legislative Council, whilst the owners of estates in that country offered situations to 784 Maltese workmen. Public opinion did not, however, countenance emigration to such a distant colony, and a hostile voice was raised against it by Lord Clarence Paget on the occasion of his opening of the Hydraulic Lift at Misida, in 1873. The Chief Secretary to Government, in June of the same year, proposed in Council a resolution to enable the local Government to take steps to send families to Jamaica and Trinidad, but had to withdraw it in face of the opposition of the elected members.

The project of draining the towns and suburbs of Malta had several times been considered, and a number of reports from both local and foreign experts had been drawn up and made public. The expense to be incurred was considerable, but the thickly inhabited centres were in urgent need of a proper system of drainage. The elected members were all opposed to voting the necessary funds, but the Government was firm in asserting that the work was necessary and must be carried out. In December 1877, the Chief Secretary brought before the

Council a resolution for the approval of the drainage scheme drawn up by Mr. John Lawson, C. E. and Mr. C. Andrews, C. E. in a report dated October 1872. The cost was estimated at about £75,000 of which four-sevenths was to be defrayed by the local Government, and three-sevenths by the Imperial Government. This resolution was opposed by all the elected members, but the military authorities, who were interested in the question, took the first step in the matter and carried out, at their own expense, part of the sewerage of the Three Cities. The Government contributed £3,000 towards the completion of the work without the consent of the elected members.

There was an immediate outcry against this policy, and the elected members bitterly complained to the home Government. In the momentous general election of December 1875, the following members were returned: Mr. Salvatore Cachia Zammit, Mr. Sigismondo Savona, the Rev. Canon D. Emmanuele Debono, Mr. Ramiro Barbaro, Mr. Agostino Naudi, LL.D., Mr. Giovanni Sciortino, LL.D., Mr. Carlo Maria Muscat, and for Gozo, Mr. Francesco Curmi Cecy.

Mr. Savona, who had for a good number of years taken an active part in local po-

litics, was not slow in bringing before the Council the matters for which he had been fighting in the press, and the Government had soon to face the thorny question of the corn tax.

The Imperial Government sent Mr. Francis W. Rowsell to Malta as a Royal Commissioner to make enquiries into the incidence of the grain tax. Rowsell arrived in the middle of March 1877, and his report was published on the 13th May 1878, together with a despatch of Sir Michael W. Hicks Beach, Secretary of State for the Colonies, in which a partial abolition of the corn tax was proposed and a new scheme of taxation put forward.

The people were entirely opposed to the imposition of new taxes; violent articles appeared in the press and fiery placards were posted all over Valletta. An angry crowd assembled in the Palace Square on the afternoon of the 15th May 1878, when the Council met to discuss Mr. Rowsell's report. Valletta had been in the hands of a big crowd from the early morning of that day. In order to obtain possession of their University banner for the afternoon demonstration, a number of students, with the help of a crowd of sympathisers, entered the University and threw

furniture out of the windows. A procession was then formed which passed through Strada San Marco, where Mr. Savona lived, and through Strada Scozzese, where Mr. Rowsell resided, shouting "Down with Savona" "Down with the taxes" "Down with Rowsell". Early in the afternoon the crowd attempted to enter the Palace and invade the Council Chamber, but the Police intervened and kept them back. The Governor then appeared on the balcony of the Palace and assured the people that he would see that nothing was done without the full consent of their representatives. A deputation was sent up to interview the Governor who promised to send a message to the Colonial Minister asking leave to allow the question to stand over for the time being. The corn tax problem was in fact left in abeyance and was never again taken up in the shape proposed by Mr. Rowsell.

Sir Charles Van Straubenzee was a kindly man and took pleasure in entertaining guests at his various residences. Lady Van Straubenzee was also a charming hostess and not a week passed without some function at the Palace. Vice Admiral E.A. Inglefield, C.B., F.R.S., was also noted for his hospitality and for the interest he took in the welfare of the

Maltese. The commercial community respected him greatly, and on his departure from the Island, in January 1875, the steamship agents presented him with an address thanking him for the valuable assistance he had given them during his residence in Malta.

The visit to Malta of the Prince of Wales on his way home from India, in 1876, gave the people an opportunity of showing their firm attachment to the Crown. The Prince arrived in the "Serapis" on the morning of Thursday, 5th April, and was received by the Governor, the Admiral, Sir James Drummond, the Members of the Council and several deputations. An address was read to the Prince by the senior member of the Council of Government, Mr. Cachia Zammit. The Prince then drove to the Palace amidst the frantic applause of the crowds. At night, a gorgeous illumination took place, and next day the Prince attended a military parade at Floriana and a ball at the Union Club. At an official dinner at the Palace, the Prince decorated Mr. Vincenzo Bugeja, the well-known philanthropist, with the insignia of Companion of the Order of St. Michael and St. George.

The Prince also attended various private entertainments and public ceremonies ar-

ranged in his honour, such as a naval regatta, torpedo experiments, a lunch at the Valletta Palace, a lunch given by Sir Victor and Lady Houlton, a gala night at the Manoel Theatre, a lunch on H.M.S. "Hercules" and a dinner at the mess of the 71st regiment; he also presented new colours to the 98th regiment. He left in the "Serapis", in the early morning of Tuesday 11th April, having taken leave of the local authorities at the Marsamuscetto landing place, on Monday afternoon. The collection of wild animals on the "Serapis" was visited daily by thousands of citizens during the Prince's stay.

Another Royal visit took place in October 1876, when the Duke and the Duchess of Edinburgh came to Malta to take up their residence in St. Antonio Palace. The Duchess arrived on Sunday 15th October on the Russian Imperial Yacht "Livadia", and the Duke next day in H.M.S. "Sultan", of which he was in command. On the 25th. of November of the same year, Princess Victoria Melita was born at St. Antonio Palace. The Governor was deputed by the Secretary of State to act as a witness to the identity of the new-born infant. An Address was voted by the Council of Government, and the Governor, Sir Victor Houlton, and Mr.



Cachia Zammit drove with it to S. Antonio Palace. In April 1877, Eugénie, ex-Empress of the French, visited Malta incognito as Comtesse de Pierrefonds, and stayed three days at the Imperial Hotel, Valletta.

The commemoration of Pius IX's episcopal jubilee gave occasion for another series of festivities, which were held on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd June 1877. Religious functions were conducted in all the Churches of Malta and Gozo, and Valletta was lavishly decorated for the occasion. More modest, but not less cordial and spontaneous celebrations, took place on the 16th February of the next year, on the death of Pius IX. All places of business were closed and the Requiem Mass at St. John's Church was of a most imposing character. The Church in Malta had already suffered the loss of its Bishop, Mons. Fra Gaetano Pace Forno, at the age of sixty-eight. He was succeeded by the Rev. Canon D. Carmelo Scicluna, D.D. who was formally appointed at a Consistory held by the Pope on the 15th March 1875. Bishop Scicluna was made a Papal Count in July of the same year, and the banker Mr. Emanuele Scicluna was, at the same time, created Marquis of the Holy Sepulchre.

Monsignor Antonio Grech Delicata



Cassia, dei Marchesi Testaferrata, Bishop of Gozo, who died on the 1st December 1876, was succeeded by the Right Rev. M. Pietro Pace, who, on his return from Rome, in April 1877, received a most hearty welcome at the Marina, Valletta.

Many important public works were completed and others undertaken during the Governorship of Straubenze. The foundation stone of the "Sacred Heart" Church at Sliema was laid on the 3rd June 1877. The new "Addolorata Cemetery", commenced in 1862, was opened on the 1st July 1872. The Ghar Iddud fort at Sliema was built in this year, and the road facing the sea, to the right and left of the fort, was repaired and turned into an esplanade. From this time Sliema became a popular centre and a rival of Valletta. In 1873, the Cottonera Hospital, a new military hospital capable of accommodating 148 patients, was built near Zabbar gate.

On a motion of Monsignor Farrugia in the Council of Government, on the 18th December 1872, a commission was appointed to report on the decay of the mural paintings of St. John's Church; and the masterpieces in the vault of the church, which were

rapidly fading, were retouched by the painter Mr. Carlo Ignazio Cortis.

The Hydraulic Dock of Malta, designed in 1869, and finished in 1873, was, on the 23rd January of that year, opened with the greatest ceremony; H.M.S. "Cruiser" was lifted amidst the cheering of the crowds who lined the creek. The works were set in motion by Miss Paget, daughter of Admiral Lord Clarence Paget, the chairman of the Company, who had come from England for the purpose, and the Governor, who presided at the ceremony, named the Dock "The Clarence Hydraulic Lift". The engineer was Mr. Scott Tucker.

The season of 1873 had been a very successful one for the Royal Opera House. On Sunday the 25th May, the final rehearsal took place of "La Vergine del Castello", a new opera by Privitera, who had come to Malta for the occasion and was present at the rehearsal. During the third act, an alarm was raised that the stage was on fire. Everyone rushed out and, although no lives were lost, in a few hours the flames had consumed everything within the walls, including the manuscripts of the opera and all the musical instruments. As it was known that a powder magazine lay close to the Theatre, the po-

pulation of the town was greatly alarmed and thousands of persons fled for safety to the country. Later on, heated discussions took place on the question of raising funds for the repair of the theatre; eventually, the Council agreed to restore it, and on the 26th May 1875, a sum of £12,000 was voted for this purpose. This restoration was completed in two years, and the new Opera House was inaugurated on the 11th October 1877 with a performance of "Aida".

During the restoration of the Opera House other important alterations were made in Strada Reale; the old workshop of the Knights known as the "Fianco" or the "Ferreria", opposite the theatre, was demolished, and on the site a block of houses was raised between Strada Stretta and Strada Fianco. Strada Fianco was made level with Strada Reale, and the fountain of Wignacourt, which blocked it, was removed to an open space to the left of the Porta Reale.

In 1875, Messrs. Zammit, who owned the land south-east of the Marsa, invited the Governor to lay the foundation stone of a new town they intended to erect there for the benefit of the labourers employed at the new harbour. Sir Charles Van Straubenzee proposed that the new Town should be called

"Albert Town" in honour of the late Prince Consort. "I lay this stone", he said, "hoping that the future town may contain a prosperous, worthy and contented community and prove remunerative to its spirited projectors". Unfortunately, however, the town proved a complete failure.

In 1876, Lady Van Straubenzee laid the foundation stone of the "Istituto Bugeja" at Hamrun. This Institute, founded by Marchese Vincenzo Bugeja, C.M.G., for the education and training of destitute female children, was designed by Conte Vespignani, architect of Pius IX, and built under the direction of Mr. W. Poulson. The bust of the founder, by Professor Tito Angelini of Naples, decorates the main gate.

In 1878, the Marchese Emmanuele Scicluna, established the "Franklin Manufactory of Cigars" in Via San Giuseppe, Hamrun. The factory had some years of prosperous life but perished, eventually, for lack of support.

A memorable event took place at the close of Van Straubenzee's governorship. The Russo-Turkish war had taken such a turn that Great Britain thought it proper to make a demonstration and prepare for an eventual intervention against Russia. A strong contin-

gent of Indian troops was despatched to Malta in 1878, the first transports arriving on the 19th May. Over six thousand officers and men of various native regiments, including a number of mounted troops, were stationed here for several months. The mounted troops were encamped at "Mriehel" to the North-west of Casal Curmi, and the infantry detachment was stationed on Manoel Island in the Sliema creek. An inspection of the mounted contingent by the Governor took place at Floriana on the 1st June.

Sir Charles Van Straubenzee's governorship came to an end in 1878 amidst universal regret. An address signed by 6,000 persons was presented to him on the 5th June by a deputation composed of the elected members of the Council, six dignitaries of the Church, two noblemen, three members of the Chamber of Commerce, and two advocates. The civic bands "La Vallette" and "La Vincitrice", accompanied the deputies and then marched to the Marina to await the arrival of the Governor. The popular address was read by Archdeacon De'Baroni Galea, who represented the Bishop of Malta. Another address was signed by all the members of the Council of Government, both

official and unofficial, with the exception of Mr. Savona who explained his abstention in a long letter to the press. After the reading of the addresses the Governor and Lady Van Straubenzee left the Palace accompanied by a cheering crowd, and embarked on H.M.S. "Escort". The people filled all the boats available and escorted the ship to the open sea. A more spontaneous and impressive demonstration had not been witnessed in Malta since the departure of Sir Henry Bouverie.

#### SIR ARTHUR BORTON 1878-1884

On the very day of Van Straubenzee's departure, General Sir Arthur Borton arrived in Malta as officer Administering the Government. His commissions as Governor and Commander-in-chief arrived soon after, and were formally read out on the 20th July 1878.

Borton had six years of peaceful rule broken only by fits of political unrest. On his arrival, he found a happy and prosperous community. There was in Malta a large military contingent, and great hopes of systematic emigration to Cyprus, which had just become part of the British Empire, were entertained. After giving a fine display of





Valletta from an old print.





Sir Thomas Maitland--Governor of Malta  
1813-24.

themselves at the Marsa, the Indian contingent and a good number of British troops embarked for Cyprus on the 20th July 1878. The Indian troops had been reviewed a few weeks before by the Duke of Cambridge.

Sir Garnet Wolseley was appointed Lord High Commissioner of Cyprus, and the Crown Advocate of Malta, Sir Adrian Dingli, was appointed to accompany him to that Island as legal adviser. Dotary Achille Micallef was chosen by Sir Adrian to act as his secretary. The Malta Government asked the Crown Advocate to use this opportunity for reporting as to how far and in what way state aided emigration to Cyprus should be encouraged. A memorandum on the subject was submitted to the Governor by Sir Adrian Dingli in November 1878. His scheme involved the purchase by the Malta Government of lands to be allotted in small portions to Maltese agriculturists who, it was hoped, would little by little form an important community. Two land surveyors, Mr. E.L. Galizia and Dr. George Schinas, were sent to Cyprus to study the scheme in detail, and in February 1876, Sir Adrian returned to Cyprus for the further elaboration of the scheme. Financial difficulties, the dread of malarial

fevers, and other technical troubles intervening, no further steps were taken in the matter.

Three years later, the emigration question was again taken up, but this time the objective was not Cyprus but Queensland. Following some official correspondence, Mr. Francesco Saverio De Cesare was, in 1882, sent to Australia with a number of Maltese labourers he proposed to see settled in that distant colony. A favourable report was drawn up by Mr. De Cesare, and the Queensland Government showed themselves willing to help the movement. Our agriculturists, however, could not be induced to leave their homes and travel so far, and as a sufficient number of emigrants could not be induced to register, the scheme was never given a fair trial.

At the begining of Borton's rule official recognition was given to the Nobility of Malta by a Notice published in the Government Gazette on the 26th July 1878. This Notice gave great satisfaction to that body of citizens who had for a long time been labouring under a grievance.

The thorny problems of Education and Sanitary reforms, which had been set aside

for a number of years, were taken up in 1879. The local politicians who had so strongly opposed the abolition of the corn tax, were as active as ever, and, in January 1879, when Mr. David Mc. Iver, the Member of Parliament for Birkenhead, paid a visit to the Island, he was entertained at a great dinner at the "Borsa", in recognition of the support he had given in Parliament to the party that opposed the abolition of the tax.

In March of the same year, the Government once more brought forward a resolution to get funds for the sewerage of towns, but the elected members voted against it to a man. In June, a meeting of the Council was convened by Circular to consider, as a matter of urgency, a motion for leave to introduce an Ordinance concerning sanitary matters. Instead of attending the sitting, the elected members of the Council addressed a letter to the President stating that, as the scheme for the remodelling of the drainage was passed on the 10th March, contrary to the opinion of the elected members, they refused to discuss any measure connected with the Government sewerage scheme.

The simple question of the drainage of the three Cities and Valletta had thus become a political question of the first order.

Proposed reforms in the Civil Service and in Educational methods gave further umbrage to the Council and added to the difficulties of the Government.

In January 1880, Sir Penrose Julian's report on the working of the Civil Establishment of Malta was published; in this report radical reforms were suggested, entailing a decrease of the Government's expenditure by about £22,000. This drastic retrenchment threatened so many vested interests that it was received with protests by an aggrieved majority.

The politicians came to the front once more and the grievances of the population were summarised in a petition to the House of Commons signed by 8,661 persons. The appointment of a civil Governor was advocated, together with a reform of the Constitution and the reversal of the Government decision about the drainage vote. The Secretary of State's despatch of September, opposing the proposed reforms, stirred up further political troubles.

In February 1880, the long expected report of Mr. Patrick Joseph Keenan, on the education problems of Malta, was published. Mr. Keenan, a resident Commissioner of National Education in Ireland, was fully

competent to draw up such a report, but as he advocated radical reforms in the Educational departments, and the predominance of the English language, as a medium for education, the Nationalist party took exception to it. They saw in the report an attempt to oust the Italian language, which had been so far in use in the courts, the schools, and the Church. The press opened a violent campaign, and a number of angry political meetings were held. Foremost among the stump orators was Mr. Heskett Hanson who was never weary of addressing meetings in Valletta.

Mr. Sigismondo Savona had, by this time, grown to be an important factor in local politics; he strongly supported Mr. Keenan's proposed reforms in the Council of Government, and so persistent was his advocacy, that when the Government instituted a Department of Education, in June 1880, Mr. Savona was asked to take charge of it, with the title of Director of Education.

On the 20th of June 1881, supplementary Letters Patent were granted providing for an amendment of the Constitution and the creation of an Executive Council. This Council, presided over by the Governor, consisted of the Military Officer in Command of the regular troops in the Island, the Chief



Secretary to Government, the Crown Advocate, the Auditor General, the Director of Education, the Collector of Customs, the Receiver General, the Superintendent of Posts, the Comptroller of Charitable Institutions and the Superintendent of Public Works.

A strong party, known as the "Anti-Reform Party", had meanwhile come into being to oppose the various reforms proposed by the Government. Both in the Council Chamber and in the press, this party obstructed the Government by all the means they could devise, and in 1882, as a protest against the Government majority in the Council, simpletons and disreputable persons were elected to the Council Chamber. Under these circumstances, the Council of Government was dissolved on the 19th December 1882, and Letters Patent defining the qualifications of voters and of candidates for the Council of Government of Malta, were published in March 1883.

The "Anti-Reform" party, who had become very popular, made a show of their strength in October 1883, at the first general election held under the new rules. By a large majority, this party was returned to the Council and a great demonstration was made in their honour.



The members elected on this occasion were:--

Mr. Carlo Maria Muscat (Leader),  
Rev. Canon D. Paolo Agius,  
Mr. Zaccaria Roncali, L.L.D.,  
Mr. Agostino Naudi, L.L.D.,  
Mr. Arturo dei Marchesi Barbaro,  
Captain Cooper Kirton,  
Mr. Vincenzo Bugeja, C.M.G.,  
Mr. Fortunato Mizzi, L.L.D., for Gozo.

The first meeting of the new Government Council took place on the 31st. October, when the language question was reopened and debated with as much vigour as ever. All the elected members spoke against the proposed Government reforms, and in January 1884, they addressed a letter to the Secretary of State strongly protesting against the use of the English language in the Council and in the Schools.

An important change had meanwhile taken place in the direction of public affairs in Malta owing to the resignation of Sir Victor Houlton, who had been Chief Secretary since 1855, during the rule of six Governors. On the 23rd April, a banquet was given in his honour and the members of the Civil Service expressed their feelings by presenting him with a silver cup.

Mr. Walter Hely Hutchinson was appointed Chief Secretary on the 28th April 1883, and Lieutenant Governor in 1884. His great ability and tact were much needed at a time when the Governor had to face strong, and not very moderate, opponents. Hely-Hutchinson did not, at any time, try to crush or to thwart his opponents, but always contrived to work out Government schemes with fairness and moderation.

The bombardment of Alexandria by the British fleet took place on the 11th July 1882, when the fear of a massacre by the Arabs brought to Malta 6,600 refugees in a state of utter destitution. This influx of distressed people strained the resources of the Island, but relief funds were soon collected, and £33,000, spent at the first inrush, were partly subscribed by private individuals.

During the Egyptian campaign that ensued against the Arabs, troops and war material were constantly arriving in the Island. A transport corps was formed under the command of Lieutenants W. Gatt and C. Trapani, R.M.F.A., and over 300 young men were enlisted in the British forces as muleteers. A battery from the Royal Malta Fencible Artillery, manned by 116 non-commissioned officers and men, and officered by

Captain Michael Portelli, Lieutenants A. Cavarra, Alexander Mattei, and Alfred Trapani, was despatched to Egypt. The Rev. J. Spiteri accompanied the force as Chaplain, and Mr. Teodoro Bonnici as Surgeon. The battery returned to Malta after the fall of Cairo and the capture of Arabi Pasha.

Many important public works were completed during Borton's rule. The Malta Railway, for which a company had been formed in London through the exertion of Mr. Hannibal Mirabita, was laid in 1881. It was in working order by the 28th February 1883, when it was inaugurated and blessed by Bishop Scicluna. In 1880, the Maddalena fort, and in 1883, the Musta fort, were constructed.

In 1878 the church of Stella Maris at Sliema was raised to the dignity of a parish church, and in the same year, a community of Fathers of the Society of Jesus opened a college at St. Julian's for the education of the young.

In 1881, Sliema was provided with a branch of the aqueduct, the apparatus for distilling sea water, constructed early in the year, having been deemed insufficient for the growing population in view of an impending water famine.

In June of the same year, a cheap steam

ferry service established between Valletta and Sliema caused a rapid expansion of the latter suburb.

An attempt to light Valletta and Floriana with electric light was made in 1882, by Mr. Rosembush, the manager of the Electric Telegraph Company.

The Old Marina Gate was reconstructed in 1884, and the steep approach to it from Strada Levante was greatly improved. The inauguration of this important public work was the last function performed by the Governor, who on the day of the laying of its foundation stone, announced his intention of relinquishing the governorship of the Island. "I am about to resign" he said, "the governorship of this Island which Her Majesty has confided to me during the past six years. I leave you in a state of ever increasing financial prosperity though in the midst of much political excitement. The gate is to be named *Victoria Gate* to mark the appreciation of the loyalty of the Maltese nation to the Throne of England".

Sir Arthur Borton left Malta on the afternoon of June, the 7th, on the French steamer "Bastia", regretted by the many friends he had made during his long governorship. Political opposition had been per-

sistent and often acute, but the agitators had no other aim in view but to obtain further political liberties and a better administration of public funds. The Maltese have always had a strong sense of freedom and always rebelled against bondage in any form, but in airing their political grievances they have never forgotten their sworn allegiance and their loyalty to the Crown that defended their rights at the end of the eighteenth century.



## APPENDICES.

## APPENDICES.



### APPENDIX I.

List of the extinct animals of which the remains have been obtained from the Pleistocene deposits of Malta and Gozo. (a)

#### MAMMALIA.

1. *Ursus arctos* (?) Linn.
2. *Vulpes*, sp.
3. *Canis*, sp. (Size of *C. lupus*).
4. *Leithia melitensis*, Leith Adams, sp.
- 4a. *Myoxus cartei*, (*Leithia melitensis* of Lydekker).
5. *Eliomys*, sp. (?)
6. *Arvicola amphibius*, Linn.
7. *Arvicola pratensis*, Baillon.
8. *Equus*, sp. (?)
9. *Cervus dama* (?) Linn.

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(a) Dorothea M. A. Bate, on "a small collection of vertebrate remains from Ghar Dalam, Malta." Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London, June 1916.



10. *Cervus elaphus* (var. *barbarus*) Bennet.
11. *Hippopotamus pentlandi*, Meyer.
12. *Hippopotamus melitensis*, Forsyth Major.
13. *Elephas mnaidrensis*, L. Adams.
14. *Elephas melitensis*, Falconer.
- 14a. *Elephas falconeri*, Busk (*melitensis* of Lydekker).

## AVES.

15. *Strix melitensis*, Lydekker.
16. *Entolmaetus fasciatus*, Vieill. sp.
17. *Gyps melitensis*, Lydekker.
18. *Anser*, sp. (?)
19. *Branta leucopsis*, Beckst. sp.
20. *Branta bernicla*, Linn. sp.
21. *Cygnus falconeri*, Parker.
22. *Cygnus musicus*, Beckst.
23. *Cygnus equitum*, sp. m.
24. *Cygnus*, sp. (?)
25. *Anas*, sp. (?)
26. *Marmaronetta angustirostris*, Ménétr. sp.
27. *Columba melitensis*, Lydekker.
28. *Grus melitensis*, Lydekker.
29. *Otis tarda*, Linn. sp.
30. *Tetrax*, sp.

## REPTILIA AND BATRACHIA

31. *Testudo robusta*, Leith Adams.
32. *Testudo spratti*, Leith Adams.
33. *Testudo robustissima*, Tagliaferro.
34. *Lutremys europea*, Gray.
35. *Lacerta*, sp.
36. *Batrachia* (Undetermined).

A collection of the remains of extinct animals found in Malta may be seen in the Section of Natural History of the Valletta Museum. An extensive collection of our pleistocene fossils is also on show at the British Museum (N. H.) in London.

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## APPENDIX II

Civil population of Malta and Gozo in 1901, 1911 and 1921.

## MALTA.

<i>Valletta district:</i>	1901	1911	1921
Valletta	24645	2445	22691
Floriana	7343	7577	6820
Hamrun	10393	14601	12347
Pietà	939	1205	1834
Misida	2893	3627	3373
Sliema	12015	14129	15215
St. Julian's	3235	4304(a)	2514
<i>Western district:</i>			
Notabile	825	482	1029
Rabat	7756	9499	7985
Mijarro	745	1067	1271
Dingli	807	963	1087
Sijjiei	3265	3529	3355
Mosta	4629	5783	4866
Melleha	2447	2675	2637
St. Paul's Bay	185	1032 (a)	1685

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(a) Apparent discrepancy due mostly to altered parish boundaries.

<i>Central district:</i>	1901	1911	1921
Naxaro	3429	3209	2886(a)
Birkirkara	8418	9573	8569
Gargur	1381	1512	1327
Lia	1692	1825	1612
Balzan	1096	1263	1313
Attard	1837	2052	2058
Zebbuġ	5454	5950	5361
Luka	3670	3945	3607
Curmi	8187	9404	9286

*Eastern district:*

Cospicua	14178	13449	11663
Senglea	8141	8216	7808
Vittoriosa	6093	6182	6299
Calcara	2153	2323	2006
Zabbar	5758	7012	7048
Zeitun	7234	8060	7701
Marsascirocco	446	715	791
Paula	2844	4401	5530
Tarxien	2065	2820	2877
Gudia	1133	1270	1167
Axiak	1518	1765	1629
Zurrico	3654	4524	3609
Safi	367	412	459

	1901	1911	1921
Kircop	633	786	707
Micabiba	1228	1358	1282
Krendi	1333	1522	1526

## GOZO.

Victoria	5057	5655	5219
Kercem	1037	1135	1143
Zebbug	767	912	1006
Ghasri	467	428	409
Garbo	1092	1417	1402
S. Lorenzo	643	558	528
Sannat	1116	1243	1228
Caccia	2562	3156	3262
Xeuchia	1762	2135	2314
Nadur	2948	3393	3460
Kala	1219	1368	1340
Ghain Sielem and Comino	1333	1295	1250

	1901	1911	1921
<b>Total Malta</b>	176175	198466	198344
<b>Total Gozo</b>	20003	22695	22550
<b>Total Malta and Gozo</b>	196178	221161	216614

The remarkable falling off in the rate of increase in the last ten years in some of the districts is clearly due to emigration, the birth rate and the death rate having remained practically constant. This is a very significant fact bound to force a special policy on the Government.

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## APPENDIX III

## Examples of Maltese toponymic names

- |                    |                   |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| 1. <i>Hills.</i>   | 6. <i>Rocks.</i>  |
| Il Qolla           | Xifer il Kief     |
| Il Gudia           | Il Blata is-seuda |
| Tal Ghalia         | Il Hajra tal melh |
| Il Kortin          | Lingerbeb         |
| 2. <i>Valleys.</i> | 7. <i>Fields.</i> |
| Il Fiddien         | Marj il wasa      |
| Il Kligha          | Il Habel It-tuil  |
| Il Wilja           | Qasam Barrani     |
| 3. <i>Creeks.</i>  | 8. <i>Capes.</i>  |
| Dahlet qorrot      | Ras il Gebel      |
| Ir-Ramla           | Ras il Qawra      |
| Il Mistra          | Il Muxxar         |
| 4. <i>Plains.</i>  | 9. <i>Caves.</i>  |
| Bur Marrôd         | Ghar Dalam        |
| Il Marsa           | Ghar Id-Dwieb     |
| Ix-Xaghra          | Gherien il-Lhud   |
| Misrah Ghonoq      | Harq Hamiem       |
| 5. <i>Springs.</i> | 10. <i>Wells.</i> |
| Il Qattara         | Bir id-deheb      |
| Ghain Zeituna      | Biar Jabar        |
| Ghain Tuffieha     | Bir Zebbuja       |
| In-Nixxia          | Il Misqa          |



11. *Ravines.*

Handaq ir-rum-  
mien  
Rdum l'abiad  
Rdum Ghamieq

*Beeches.*

Bahar Iç-çaghq  
Marsaxlokk  
Lirnella  
Xatt-il-qwabar  
Marsa-il-forn

12. *Villages.*

Hal Qormi  
Zurrieq  
Haz-Zebbuq  
Haz-Zabbar  
Hal-Luka  
Hal-Lia  
Zurriek  
Naxxar  
Mosta  
Gudia

*Other topical names:—*

Ix-Xemxia  
Jebel Ciantar  
Il Ghadira  
Li Mtarfa  
Il Qolla  
Il Bahria  
Il Ghassiewi  
Id-Dabrani  
Il Qalgha  
Il Qaws  
Il Wardia

Il Qawra  
Burmghes  
Jnien Xibla  
Il Gzira  
Li Msida  
Il Ghasri  
Il Borj  
Il Ghaqba  
Il Maqluba  
Qaliet Malku  
Bujibba.

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## APPENDIX IV

Sovereigns who reigned over the Maltese Islands, from 1090 to 1530.

NORMANS: Count Roger, afterwards King Roger I, 1090-1101.

Roger II, son of Roger I, 1101-1154.

William I (the Bad), son of Roger II, 1154-1166.

William II (the Good), son of William I, 1164-1189.

Tancred, son of Roger I, 1189-1194.

Count of Malta-Margaritone di Brindisi.

SUABIANS: Henry VI, German Emperor, (married to Costanza, daughter of Roger I.) 1194-97.

Count of Malta, Guglielmo di Brindisi.

Frederick (II of Germany and I of Sicily), son of Henry VI, 1197-1250.

Count of Malta - Arrigo Pistore.

Conrad, son of Frederick, 1250-1254.

SUABIANS: Conradino, son of Conrad,  
(*contd.*) 1254-1256.

Count of Malta - Nicolò Pi-  
store.

ANGEVINES: Charles, Count of Anjou,  
(brother of Louis IX of  
France) 1256-82.

ARAGONESE: Peter, (I of Sicily and III  
of Aragon) married to Co-  
stanza daughter of Tancred  
the Norman, 1283-1285.

James, son of Peter, 1285-96.

Countess of Malta - Donna  
Lucina, daughter of Nicolò.  
Frederick II, brother of  
James, 1296-1337.

Counts of Malta-Ruggiero de  
Flor, the Infante Giovanni,  
Duke of Athens, son of  
Frederick II, and Roger  
Loria.

Peter II, son of Frederick,  
1337-1342.

Louis, son of Peter II, 1342-  
1355.

Frederick III (the Simple),  
son of Peter II, 1355-1377.

Counts of Malta - Niccolò  
Acciaïoli, Count of Amalfi.

ARAGONESE: Angelo his son, and Robert  
(*contd.*) son of Angelo. Later on,  
(1377) Guglielmo d'Aragona  
natural son of Frederick III.

Mary, daughter of Frederick  
III, wife of Martin I, 1377-  
1402.

Marquis of Malta-Guglielmo  
Raimondo de Moncada; later  
on, Counts of Malta-Artale  
d'Aragona and Guglielmo,  
Don Luigi and Giacomo  
d'Aragona, later on, Da  
Moncada once more.

Martin I, 1402-1409.

Martin II, father of Martin I,  
1409-1410.

CASTILIANS: Ferdinand I, son of Martin II's  
sister, 1412-1416.

Alphonse, son of Ferdinand,  
1416-1458.

Counts of Malta-Don Antonio  
Cardona, and in 1425 Don  
Gonsalvo Monroi.

John, son of Ferdinand, 1458-  
1472.

Ferdinand (II of Sicily and  
V of Spain), 1479-1516.

Joanna, daughter of Ferdinand, Mother of Charles V.  
1516-1519.

Charles, (II of Sicily and V of Germany) 1519-1555.  
In 1530 Charles ceded Malta to the Order of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem.

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## APPENDIX V

*Districts of Malta at the time of Grand Master de Paule.*

*Naxxar*, which included the minor villages of Hal Gharour, Mosta, and Hal Musliemet;

*Birkirkara*, including Hat-tard, Hal-Lia, Hal-Balzan, Hal-Bordi and Hal-Man;

*Curmi*, including Hal-Caprat;

*Santa Maria ta Bir Miftuħ*, to which were attached Hal-Luqa, Hal-Tarxien, Gudia, Hal-Kirkop, Hal-Farruj, Hal-Safi, Mqabba.

*Sijjiewi*, with the dependencies of Hal-Cbir, Hal-Xluq, Hal Qdieri, Hal-Tabuni, Hal-Taltalmi;

*Santa Catarina*, with Bisqallin, Haz-Zabbar Hal-Asciak, Hal-Jwan, Hal-Bisbut;

*Zurrieq*, including Qrendi, Hal-Leu, Hal-Millieri, Bubaqra and Hal-Manin;

*Zebbuġ*, with Hal-Musci and Hal-Duiel;

*Dingli*, with Hal-Tartarni.

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## APPENDIX VI

Extract from a decree of G. M. Pinto, constituting the Malta University, given on the 22nd November 1769.

“ We create, from this date, a public University of general studies and grant to the said University, to its Directors, Lecturers, Teachers, and Pupils, all the privileges, prerogatives, pre-eminences, graces and honours, which have been granted to other Universities, and it is our will that they should enjoy and use the same as if they were specially expressed therein.

“ For the better management of the said College and University, we hereby create a dignitary to be known as Protector whom we shall in due time appoint and who in our stead and under our orders shall have every right of superiority and direction, and we now invest him with the powers to confer the degree of Bachelor, Licentiate, Doctor and Master, conformably with and in persuance of the laws and usages of other public Universities, or such as shall have pursued their studies during the prescribed period, and as shall be of good conduct and shall have acquired a sufficient



“knowledge in the Faculties in which they  
“seek a degree; and we direct that those  
“who are promoted in the various degrees  
“shall enjoy all such pre-eminences, prerogatives,  
“graces and honours as are enjoyed  
“by graduates of other public Universities.”

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## APPENDIX VII

Members of the "Government Commission appointed by Bonaparte:—

Reynaud de Saint Jean d'Angely, Government Commissary or Civil Governor; Bosredon Ransijat, president; Vincent Caruana, Secretary to the Bishop; Charles Astor, merchant in Malta; Paolo Ciantar, merchant in Malta; Jean Francois Dorell, alderman; Paolo Grungo, Judge in Gozo; Benedetto Schembri, Magistrate; Canon Don Saverio Caruana, cotton weaver at Città Vecchia; Christoforo Frendo, Notary. Louis Ovide Doublet was appointed Secretary to the Commission.

Valletta and Vittoriosa were made into two municipalities, called Western and Eastern. The first members of the western municipality were:—Fra Stefano Libreri, president; Camillo Xiberras; Dr. Filippo Torreggiani; Nicola Efner; Saverio Purtughes. The members of the Vittoriosa municipality were: Giuseppe Maurin, Marc' Antonio Muscat, Giovanni Dalli, Gaetano Bertis and Gaetano Pisani. The Treasurer was Gian Francesco Sant.

On the 3rd July 1798, the rest of the Island was divided into eight municipalities.

## APPENDIX VIII

One of the numerous Circular Letters sent during the Siege of Valletta, by the French Commander-in-Chief, to those who were supposed to have money in their houses:—

Malte

Liberté

Egalité

*République Française.*

Au quartier général de Malte le 6 Vendemaire  
an 7 de la République Française une et  
indivisible.

*Vaubois* Général de Division.

Commandant en chef dans les Iles de Malte  
et du Gozo.

Al Cittadino Claudio Delenda.

“Gli atroci delitti commessi dai vostri concittadini della Campagna, e da diverse persone del Cantone dell’est e dell’ovest mi mettono nel caso di ricorrere ad un imprestito per pagare la truppa. Bisogna che il soldato sia esattamente pagato per poter arrestare il suo giusto risentimento e contenerlo nella più esatta disciplina dei bravi militari che videro i loro compagni vilmente scannati in Burmola e nella campagna.

“Vi ho dunque compreso in quest’imprestito per la somma di scudi duecento, che

pagherete nel termine di 24 ore da correr dal momento in cui riceverete la presente. Vi garantisco il vostro denaro e mi rendo responsabile per la Republica sopra la lealtà della quale potete contare. Ogni rifiuto mi diverrà sospetto ed essendo informato delle vostre facoltà, credo di agire con gran moderazione tanto più che la legge della guerra m'autorizzava ad esigerne una contribuzione.

"I lucri vi saranno pagati a tre per cento l'anno.

"Il cittadino Poussielgue pagatore della guerra riceverà il vostro danaro.

Salute e fraternità,

VAUBOIS."

#### TRANSLATION.

The atrocious crimes committed by your country people and by several persons of the Eastern and Western districts, compel me to have recourse to a loan to pay the troops. It is imperative that the soldier should be punctually paid to calm his just resentment and keep up discipline in the brave soldiers who saw their comrades treacherously butchered in Burmola and in the country.

I have therefore put you down for the loan of the sum of 200 scudi to be paid within 24 hours from the moment you receive this letter.

I guarantee your money and will render myself responsible on behalf of the Republic, on whose loyalty you may depend.

As I have been informed of your means, your refusal will be considered with suspicion all the more that I am authorised by the laws of war to exact a contribution.

Interest at the rate of three per cent per annum will be paid to you.

The citizen Possielgue, the Paymaster of the Army, will receive your money.

Health and Fraternity,

VAUBOIS.

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## APPENDIX IX.

The duly elected Representatives of the Casals who, formed the National Congress on the 11th February 1799 under the presidency of Capt. Alex. Ball R.N. were:—

For Notabile	Notary Emmanuele Vitale.
„ Zebbuġ	„ Pietro Buttigieg
„ Sijjieuġ	Don Salv. Curso
„ Micabiba	Don Aloisio Bartolomeo Garaffa.
„ Krendi	Gregorio Mifsud.
„ Zurrico	Don Fortunato Dalli.
„ Safi	Don G. Abdilla.
„ Chircop	Dr. Enrico Xerri.
„ Gudia	Filippo Castagna.
„ Axiak	Rev. Don Pietro Mallia.
„ Zeitun	Michele Cachia.
„ Zabbar	Agostino Said.
„ Tarxien	Giuseppe Montebello.
„ Luca	Dr. Gius. Casha.
„ Curmi	Stanislao Gatt.
„ Birkirkara	Vincenzo Borg.
„ Gargur	Don Giovanni Gafà
„ Naxaro	Chev. Paolo Parisio Muscati.
„ Musta	Don Felice Calleja.
„ Lia	Salvatore Gafà.
„ Balzan	Giuseppe Frendo.
„ Attard	Notary Saverio Zarb.

## APPENDIX X.

THE ADDRESS OF BIGADIER GENERAL  
GRAHAM TO THE MALTESE.

—

“Brave Maltese—You have rendered yourselves interesting and conspicuous to the world. History affords no more striking example. Betrayed to your invaders, deprived of the means of resistance, eternal slavery seemed to be your inevitable doom. The oppression, the sacrilege of your tyrants became intolerable. Regardless of consequences, you determined at every hazard to vindicate your wrongs.

“Without arms, without the resources of war, you broke asunder your chains. Your patriotism, your courage, your religion supplied all deficiencies. Your energy commanded victory and an enemy, formidable to the best disciplined armies of Europe, yielded in every point to your unexampled efforts, and hid their disgrace behind the ramparts. The gallant battalions of the casals have ever since confined them there, with a vigilance and patience worthy of the cause of freedom.

“You called for assistance. The Powers acting in alliance for the support of civil



society hastened to your relief; arms, ammunition, money and corn have been supplied to you. Their ships have intercepted the succours of the enemy.

“My master, the Sovereign of a free and generous people, sent me with a handful of men to assist you, till a powerful force could be prepared for the reduction of La Valletta. The circumstances of the war have hitherto retarded it, but this is a precious moment and ought not to be lost. What is to be done to profit by this favourable conjuncture? I anticipate your answer.

“You are ready again to unite in a mass, to complete the glorious work you began. To arms, then, Maltese! Let the universal cry through the island be: “For God and our Country”. Who is there deaf to every sense of duty and of honour that will not gladly obey such a call? None, none, but traitors or time-serving cowards! We do not wish for such in our ranks. That unerring voice which will distinguish with the title of hero every man who exposes himself for his country will equally stamp their names with indelible infamy.

“Quit then your habits of industry for a few weeks; dedicate yourselves, under the immediate direction of your own officers, and

under the guidance of those whose professional skill and experience will direct your labours, most beneficially, to the great and important object of the final conquest of your enemies. A weak and dispirited garrison, unequal to the defence of such extensive works, cannot withstand your efforts. Success will reward your toil and you will soon return to the bosoms of your families proud, justly proud, of having saved your country.

(Sd) Thos. Graham, Brig.-General.  
Head Quarters, Gudia 19th June, 1800."

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## APPENDIX XI.

PROCLAMATION BY MR. CHARLES CAMERON  
OF THE 15TH JULY, 1801.

“To the Maltese Nation,

“ Having been charged by His Majesty  
“ the King of Great Britain, to conduct all  
“ the affairs (except the Military) of these  
“ Islands of Malta and Gozo, with the title  
“ of His Majesty’s Civil Commissioner, I avail  
“ myself, with the highest satisfaction, of this  
“ opportunity to assure you of the paternal  
“ care and affection of the King towards you;  
“ and that His Majesty grants you full pro-  
“ tection and the enjoyment of all your  
“ dearest rights; he will protect your churches,  
“ your holy religion, your persons and your pro-  
“ perty. He will extend his paternal care to  
“ the hospitals and to the other charitable  
“ institutions, to the education of youth, to  
“ the orphan and diseased children, to the  
“ poor and to all those who apply for his  
“ beneficence.

“ Happy people! whom the Hand of  
“ God has saved from the horrible misery  
“ and oppression under which so many in-  
“ nocent nations groan, receive with gratitude  
“ all this goodness from a King who is the  
“ father of his subjects, who protects the

“weak against the strong, the poor against  
“the rich, under whose dominion all are  
“equally protected by the law.

“Hitherto you have conducted your-  
“selves with decorum and submission to the  
“legitimate authorities and your ancient fame  
“in arms has not been laid aside in the de-  
“fence you lately made of your country.

“Commerce being now extended, arts  
“and sciences protected, manufactures and  
“agriculture supported, and industry rewar-  
“ded, Malta will become the emporium of  
“the Mediterranean and the seat of con-  
“tentment.

“To carry out such gracious commands  
“of my Sovereign is not less my ardent  
“desire than it is my sacred duty. My door  
“shall be open to all. I will hear everybody.  
“I shall be ready to render justice, to cause  
“the law to be observed, tempering it with  
“clemency, and to receive every information  
“which shall have for its object the welfare  
“of the Maltese and, above all, I shall de-  
“vote myself to the means of promoting the  
“cultivation and manufacture of cotton and  
“of introducing and maintaining prosperity  
“in these Islands”.

CHARLES CAMERON.

The Palace, July 15th 1801.”

## APPENDIX XII.

## THE INCIDENT OF FROBERG'S REGIMENT.

Count Froberg had raised for the British Government a regiment of Greeks, Albanians, Turks and others, for service in the Mediterranean. This regiment was stationed at Malta for some time and proved very troublesome to its officers. On April 4th, 1807, the regiment stationed at Fort Ricasoli, mutinied and killed some of its officers, hoisted a Russian flag and threatened to fire on Valletta if they were in any way molested. The fort was surrounded with British troops and 400 of the mutineers surrendered a few days later. A detachment of men, however, refused to give in and began firing on Floriana. A party of Maltese military artificers scaled one of the walls of the fort at night-time and the mutineers, after sustaining a siege for some days in the powder magazine, set fire to it in the hope of blowing up the besieging forces. Three sentries were killed but six of the mutineers were secured. Later on, thirty of the soldiers were executed on the Floriana parade ground, fifteen being hanged and fifteen shot.

## APPENDIX XIII.

## THE FIRST COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENT.

On the 1st May 1835, the following proclamation (No. 5 of 1835) was issued by the Governor :—

“ His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, with feelings of high satisfaction is pleased to notify and publish to the people of these Possessions, that His Majesty the King, in his anxious solicitude for the welfare and prosperity of His Maltese subjects, and of the other inhabitants of this Island and its Dependencies, has been graciously pleased, with the advice of his Privy Council, to create, constitute, and appoint a Council within these his Possessions, to advise and assist in the administration of the Government thereof; which Council is to consist of seven persons exclusive of the Governor, Lieutenant-Governor, or officer administering for the time being the Government of these Possessions; of which seven, four shall at all times be persons holding offices within this Island and its Dependencies and the remaining Members shall be persons not holding offices. And His Majesty has been graciously pleased to declare and appoint

“ the senior officer for the time being in  
“ command of his Land Forces in this  
“ Island, not being in the Administration of  
“ the Government, the Honourable the Chief  
“ Justice of this Island and its Dependencies  
“ for the time being, the Most Reverend the  
“ Archbishop-Bishop of this Island for the  
“ time being, and the Chief Secretary to  
“ Government for the time being, to be such  
“ four official members as aforesaid. And  
“ His Majesty has been pleased further to  
“ declare, that the three Unofficial Members  
“ of such Council shall be selected by His  
“ Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, two  
“ from and out of the Chief Landed Pro-  
“ prietors and Merchants of this Island, be-  
“ ing His Majesty’s native born subjects, and  
“ the third from and out of the Principal  
“ Merchants of this Island being British-born  
“ subjects, who shall have been actually resi-  
“ dent for a period of not less than two years.

“ To the Members of this Council His  
“ Majesty has been graciously pleased to  
“ grant the enjoyment of freedom of debate  
“ and vote in all affairs of public concern  
“ that may be brought under their considera-  
“ tion in Council, and also to authorise them,  
“ whilst such members, to assume the ad-  
“ junctive style of *Honourable*.



“ His Majesty has also declared his will  
“ and pleasure that a proper person he ap-  
“ pointed to perform the duties of Clerk of  
“ the said Council, who shall attend and be  
“ present at the meetings and deliberations  
“ thereof, unless when otherwise directed by  
“ the Governor, or Lieutenant-Governor, or  
“ in their absence by the Senior Member of  
“ Council presiding, but without voting or  
“ concurring in such deliberations. And His  
“ Majesty has signified his pleasure that the  
“ Assistant Secretary to Government be ap-  
“ pointed to perform the functions of such  
“ Clerk.”

On the 12th October 1835 a proclamation was published notifying the names of the following as members of the Council of Government in Malta:—

Lieutenant Colonel George Cardew, as the Officer Administering the Government during the absence of the Lieutenant Governor.

The Honourable and Most Reverend Archbishop Dr. Don Francesco Saverio Caruana, Bishop of this Island.

Lieutenant Colonel the Honourable Henry Balneavis, C.M.G., being the Senior in Command of His Majesty's land forces

and not being in the administration of the Government.

The Honourable Sir John Stoddart Knight, the Chief Justice.

Colonel the Honourable Sir Frederick Hankey, G.C.M.G., the Chief Secretary to Government.

The Honourable Baron Giuseppe Maria De Piro, one of the Chief Landed proprietors of the Island, being a native born subject of His Majesty.

The Honourable Agostino Portelli, one of the Chief Merchants of the Island, being a native born subject of His Majesty.

The Honourable Nicholas John Aspinall, one of the Principal Merchants of the Island being a British-born subject of his Majesty actually resident within these Possessions for upwards of two years.

William Sim, Esq., as Assistant Secretary to the Government and the Clerk of the Council.

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LIST OF NEWSPAPERS PUBLISHED  
ON THE GRANTING OF A FREE PRESS.

Amico della Patria	Anno di Grazia 1846
Ape Melitense	Aristide
Bertoldo	Brighella
Caulata	Clown
Corriere Maltese	Cospicuoano
Critic	Democrito
Diogene	Eraclito
Farfalla	Figaretto
Filologo	Foglio del Popolo
Friend of Religion	Giornale Cattolico
Giornale di Commercio	Globo
Giù la Tirannide	Harlequin
Head Quarters	Illuminator
Indicator	Lloyd Maltese
Malta Chronicle	Malta Herald
Malta Mail	Malta Penny Magazine
Malta Times	Maltese
Malti	Mediterranean Maga-
Mediterraneo	zine
Omnibus	National
Politica e Giurispru-	Osservatore Maltese
denza	Pasquino e Marforio
Phosphorus	Portafoglio Maltese
Repertorio	Serpinella
Spettatore Imparziale	Stenterello
Unione	Vagheggiatore
Valletta Journal	Zanzara.

## APPENDIX XV.

DESPATCH OF SECRETARY OF STATE  
APPOINTING MR. O'FERRALL GOVERNOR  
Downing Street,

16th November, 1847.

"Sir,

"With reference to my despatch No. 1. of the 29th ultimo, transmitting to you Her Majesty's Commission and the accompanying Instructions, by which you were appointed Civil Governor of the Island of Malta and its Dependencies, it is now my duty to convey to you the following explanation of the objects with a view to which Her Majesty has been pleased to confer upon you this important office.

"You are aware that, in consequence of complaints having been addressed to the Ministers of the Crown by the inhabitants of Malta of defects in their Institutions and in the general administration of their internal government, a Commission of enquiry was appointed in 1836 to proceed to Malta to collect such information as might enable Her Majesty's advisers to supply a remedy to their complaints, and thereby promote the peace and contentment of Her Majesty's

faithful subjects in Malta, which their devotion to Her Majesty and their well tried loyalty to the Crown so fully merit.

“The results of the Commission not having proved so satisfactory as had been generally anticipated, a very general feeling has been expressed in Malta in favour of no longer placing in the same hands the Civil Government of the Island and the Military Command of the Garrison in order that the Governor may be enabled to devote a larger share of time and attention of the civil affairs of the Island.

“Her Majesty, therefore, being anxious to consult the just and reasonable wishes of Her faithful subjects in Malta, whom she regards as having peculiar claims upon Her consideration from their being necessarily precluded from representative Institutions common to so large a proportion of Her subjects, has been graciously pleased to accede to their prayer for the appointment of a Civil Governor.

“In recommending to Her Majesty that you, Sir, should be selected to hold that appointment, the Advisers of the Crown desire to afford to the Maltese people a practical proof that Religious opinions are no disqualification from offices of great trust and importance

under the Crown and that loyalty to the Sovereign and attachment to British interests will ensure to all classes of Her Majesty's subjects in every part of Her Dominions an equal share of consideration and confidence.

"Her Majesty is deeply sensible of the noble confidence reposed by the Maltese People in the honour and good faith of Great Britain at the period when, having nearly achieved their independence by their own gallant efforts, they placed their dearest interests almost unconditionally at the disposal of Her Royal Predecessor. Her Majesty responds to the confidence and desires that all the Institutions Civil and Religious to which the Maltese are attached and which they have so long enjoyed may be fostered and preserved, subject to such amendments and improvements as time and circumstances may render necessary, in concurrence with the feelings and opinions of the People for whose benefit they are intended. You will bear in mind that an additional responsibility attaches to the Government of an unrepresented People, and renders it more incumbent on those who administer their affairs to supply, so far as possible, the advantage to

be derived from direct representation by an attentive observation of Public Opinion.

“It will be an essential part of your duty to promote harmony and peace between all classes of Her Majesty’s subjects at Malta, and to enforce by example and precept a general toleration, the foundation of Religious liberty, which belongs of right to all the subjects of Her Majesty, distinguishing between the unrestrained freedom of public Worship for every Sect, and the licence of disturbing established Religious Institutions under any pretext whatever.

“On your arrival at Malta you will communicate this despatch or its substance to your Council and impress upon them and the subordinate Officers of the Government, whether English or Maltese that, in administering the affairs of Malta, they are the servants of the Crown paid by the Maltese people for services to be rendered to the Colony and You will enjoin and, if necessary, enforce zeal in the discharge of their several duties, and a ready attention to the representations and complaints of all classes of the People.

“By thus making known the intentions of Her Majesty, and the views of Her Majesty’s Advisers, in recommending so im-



portant a change in the mode of administering the affairs of Malta, I trust it may facilitate your efforts, and obtain for your Government the support of the Maltese People in the gradual correction of any abuses which may now exist, and may interfere with their enjoying that full measure of prosperity and happiness which Her Majesty so earnestly desires for them.

(Sd) GREY.

The Right Honourable

Richard More O'Ferrall, etc."

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## APPENDIX XVI.

LIST OF GRAND MASTERS OF THE ORDER OF ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM WHO GOVERNED MALTA, WITH THE DATE OF THEIR ACCESSION.

1. Fra Philipppo Villiers de l'Isle Adam (French) elected at Rhodes in 1521; arrived in Malta on the 24th March, 1530.
2. Fra Pierino del Ponte (Italian) 26th August, 1534.
3. Fra Didier de Saint Jaille (French) 22nd November, 1535.
4. Fra Jean d'Homedes (Spanish) 20th October, 1536.
5. Fra Claude de La Sengle (French) 11th September, 1553.
6. Fra Jean Parisot de La Vallette (French) 21st August, 1557.
7. Fra Pietro del Monte (Italian) 23rd August, 1568.
8. Fra Jean Levesque de La Cassiere (French) 30th January, 1572.
9. Fra Hugues de Loubenx Verdalle (French) 12th January, 1582.
10. Fra Martino Garzes (Spanish) 8th May, 1595.
11. Fra Alof de Wignacourt (French) 10th February, 1601.

12. Fra Dom Luys Mendez de Vasconcellos (Spanish) 17th September, 1622.
13. Fra Antoine de Paule (French) 10th March, 1623.
14. Fra Jean Paul Lascaris Castellar (French) 12th June, 1636.
15. Fra Martino de Redin (Spanish) 17th August, 1657.
16. Fra Annett de Clermont de Chattes Gessan (French) 9th February, 1660.
17. Fra Raffaele Cotoner (Spanish) 5th June, 1660.
18. Fra Nicola Cotoner (Spanish) 23rd October, 1663.
19. Fra Gregorio Carafa (Italian) 2nd May, 1680.
20. Fra Adrien de Wignacourt (French) 24th July, 1690.
21. Fra Ramon Perellos y Roccafull (Spanish) 5th February, 1697.
22. Fra Marc'Antonio Zondadari (Italian) 13th January, 1720.
23. Fra Don Anton Manuel de Vilhena (Portuguese) 19th June, 1722.
24. Fra Don Ramon Despuig (Spanish) 16th December, 1736.
25. Fra Don Emmanuel Pinto de Fonçeca (Portuguese) 18th January, 1741.

26. Fra Don Francisco Ximenes de Texada  
(Spanish) 28th January, 1773.
  27. Fra Emmanuel de Rohan Polduc  
(French) 16th November, 1775.
  28. Fra Ferdinand de Hompesch (German)  
16th July, 1779.
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## APPENDIX XVII.

LIST OF THE INQUISITORS IN MALTA  
WITH THE DATE OF THEIR APPOINTMENT. (a)

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Mons. Pietro Duzzina	1574
„ Pietro Sant'Umano	1575
„ Rinaldo Corso	1577
„ Domenico Petrucci	1579
„ Federico Cefalotto	1580
„ Francesco Costa	1583
„ Ascanio Libertano	1585
„ Gio Batta Petralata	1587
„ Paolo Bellardito	1587 and 1590
„ Angelo Gennai	1590
„ Giovanni dell'Armi	1592
„ Innocenzio Del Bufalo (after- wards Cardinal)	1595
„ Antonio Ortensio	1598
„ Fabrizio Verallo (afterwards Cardinal)	1600
„ Ettore Diottalevi	1605
„ Leonello della Corbora	1607
„ Evangelista Carbonesio	1609

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(a) from A. Ferris—*Storia Ecclesiastica di Malta*  
1877.

Mons.	Fabio Delagossa	1614
„	Antonio Torniello	1619
„	Paolo Torelli	1621
„	Carlo Bovio	1623
„	Onorato Visconte	1624
„	Niccolo Herrera	1627
„	Ludovico Serristori	1630
„	Martino Alfieri	1631
„	Fabio Chigi (afterwards Cardinal and Pope Alexander VII)	1634
„	Gio. Batta Gori Pannellini	1639
„	Antonio Pignatelli (afterwards Cardinal and Pope Innocent XII)	1646
„	Carlo Cavalletti	1649
„	Federico Borromeo (afterwards Cardinal)	1653
„	Giulio Degli Oddi	1655
„	Gerolamo Casanatte (afterwards Cardinal)	1659
„	Galeazzo Mariscotti (afterwards Cardinal)	1663
„	Angelo Ranucci (afterwards Car- dinal)	1666
„	Carlo Bichi (afterwards Cardinal)	1668
„	Giovanni Tempi	1670
„	Ranuccio Pallavicini (afterwards Cardinal)	1672
„	Ercole Visconti	1676

Mons.	Giacomo Cantelmi (afterwards Cardinal)	1678
„	Innico Caraccioli (afterwards Cardinal)	1683
„	Tomaso Ruffo	1686
„	Francesco Aquaviva (afterwards Cardinal)	1690
„	Tomaso Ruffo (afterwards Cardinal)	1694
“	Giacinto Filiberto Ferreri	1698
„	Giorgio Spinola (afterwards Cardinal)	1703
„	Giacomo Caraccioli	1706
„	Ranieri Delci (afterwards Cardinal)	1711
„	Lazza Pallavicino	1718
“	Antonio Ruffo (afterwards Cardinal)	1720
„	Fabrizio Serbelloni (afterwards Cardinal)	1728
„	Gio Francesco Stoppani (after- wards Cardinal)	1731
„	Carlo Francesco Durini (after- wards Cardinal)	1735
„	Lodovico Gualtieri (afterwards Cardinal)	1740
„	Paolo Passionei	1743
„	Gregorio Salviati (afterwards Cardinal)	1754



Mons. Angelo Durini (afterwards Cardinal)	1760
„ G. Ott. Manciforte Sperelli (afterwards Cardinal)	1767
„ Antonio Lante (afterwards Cardinal)	1771
„ A.F. Chigi Zondadari (afterwards Cardinal)	1777
„ Alessio Falconieri	1785
„ Gio Filippo Gallarati Scotti (afterwards Cardinal)	1785
„ Giulio Carpegna (afterwards Cardinal)	1793

Carpegna went to Rome in 1798 leaving in his place as Pro-Inquisitor the Rev. G. B. Gatt who, two months later, had to leave by order of Napoleon Bonaparte.

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## APPENDIX XVIII.

LIST OF BISHOPS OF MALTA AND GOZO  
FROM THE ARRIVAL OF THE ORDER  
WITH THE DATE OF THEIR APPOINTMENT.

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Fra Tommaso Bosio of Asti, Vice-Chancellor of the Order	1538
Fra Domenico Cubelles, Prior of St. John's Church	1540
Fra Martino Royas, Vice-Chancellor of the Order	1572
Fra Tommaso Gargal, Chancellor of the Order	1578
Fra Baldassare Cagliares, Uditore of the Grand Master	1615
Fra M. Giovanni Balaguer Camarasa, Grand Prior of the Order	1635
Mons. Luca Bueno, Grand Prior of the Order	1663
Mons. Lorenzo Astiria	1669
Mons. Michele Gerolamo Molina	1678
Fra Davide Cocco Palmieri, Almoner of the Grand Master	1684
Fra Giacomo Cannaves, Grand Prior of the Order	1713
Fra Gaspare Gori Mancini, of Siena	1722
Fra Paolo Alferan De Bussan, a Frenchman	1728

Fra Bartolomeo Rull, Grand Prior of the Order	1758
Fra Giovanni Carmelo Pellerano, Vice-Chancellor of the Order	1770
Fra Vincenzo Labini, of Bitonto (Italy). (The first to assume the title of Archbishop of Rhodes)	1780
Mons. Ferdinando Mattei, of Malta	1807
Mons. Franc. Saverio Caruana, of Malta	1831
Mons. Publio M. Sant	1847
Mons. Fra Gaetano Pace Forno, Order of St. Augustine	1857
Mons. Conte Carmelo Scicluna, D.D.,	1875
Fra Antonio Maria Buhagiar, O.M.C. (Administrator)	1885
Mons. Pietro Pace, G.C.V.O., D.D.,	1889
Fra Angelo Portelli, O.P. (Administrator)	1914
Mons. Dom Maurus Caruana, O.S.B., G.C.O.J., K.B.E.,	1915

#### BISHOPS OF GOZO.

Mons. Don Michele Francesco Butigieg	1864
Fra Paolo Micallef (Administrator)	1866
„ Don Antonio Grech Delicata	1867
„ Don Pietre Pace	1877
Fra G.M. Camilleri, O.S.A.	1889
„ Don Michael Gonzi, D.D., D.C.L.	1925

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## APPENDIX XIX.

## LIST OF COMMISSIONERS AND GOVERNORS.

- 1799 February 9th, Captain Alexander Ball,  
R.N., President of the Provisional  
Government.
- 1801 February 20th, Major General H. Pigot,  
in charge of the troops and of the  
Government.

## CIVIL COMMISSIONERS:—

- 1801 June 30th, Sir Charles Cameron.
- 1802 July 24th, Sir Alexander Ball, R.N.
- 1810 April 14th, Lt. General Sir Hildebrand  
Oakes.

## GOVERNORS AND COMMANDERS-IN-CHIEF:—

- 1813 October 5th, Lt. General Sir Thomas  
Maitland.
- 1824 June 7th, General the Most Noble  
Francis Marquis of Hastings.
- 1827 February 15th, Major General Fred.  
Cavendish Ponsonby.
- 1836 November 18th, Major General Sir  
Henry F. Bouverie.
- 1843 July 13th, General Sir Patrick Stuart.

- 1847 December 18th, The Right Honorable Richard More O'Ferrall.
- 1851 November 14th, Major General Sir William Reid.
- 1858 April 30th, Lieutenant General Sir John Gaspard le Marchant.
- 1864 November 30th, Lieutenant General Sir Henry Storkes.
- 1867 May 15th, General Sir Patrick Grant.
- 1872 June 1st, General Sir Charles T. Van Straubenzee.
- 1878 July 20th, General Sir Arthur Borton.
- 1884 June 13th, General Sir John Lintorn Arabin Simmons.
- 1887 December 26th, Lieutenant General Sir Henry D'Oyly Torrens.
- 1890 January 11th, Lieutenant General Sir Henry Augustus Smyth.
- 1893 December 9th, General Sir Arthur J. Lyon Fremantle.
- 1898 November 26th, Lieutenant General Francis W., Lord Grenfell.
- 1903 March 2nd, General Sir Charles Mansfield Clarke.
- 1907 August 9th, Lieutenant General Sir Henry Fane Grant.
- 1909 August 3rd, General Sir Henry Macleod Leslie Rundle.

- 1915 January 27th, Field Marshal Paul  
Sanford, Lord Methuen.
- 1919 June 10th, Field Marshal Herbert  
Charles Onslow, Lord Plumer.
- 1924 June 29th, General Sir Walter Norris  
Congreve, V.C.
- 1927 General Sir John Philip Du Cane.
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## APPENDIX XX.

## OFFICERS WHO ADMINISTERED THE GOVERNMENT DURING THE ABSENCE ON LEAVE OF THE GOVERNOR, FOR THE TIME BEING.

Major General Layard, 1815-16-17-19.

Major General Hutchinson, 1815.

Lieutenant Colonel Rey, R.A., 1819.

Major General Sir Manley Power, 1819-20-21-22-23-24-25.

Lieutenant Col. Augustus Warburton, 1819-31,

Colonel Sir William Parker Carrol, 1822-23.

Major General Alexander Woodford, 1825-26.

Colonel Maurice Charles O'Connell, 1827.

Colonel Henry A. Marshal, 1831.

Lieutenant Colonel Henry Balneavis, 1831-35-43-46.

Colonel George Brown, 1832.

Lt. Colonel the Hon. Sir Charles Gordon, 1832.

Col. Sir Howard Elphinstone, 1832-34.

Lt. Col. George Cardew, 1835-41.

Col. Thomas Evans, 1836.

Col. Mildmay Fane, 1847.

The Hon. Colonel Rice Jones, 1849.



- The Hon. Lieutenant General Robert Ellice,  
1849-51.
- The Hon. Lt. General Sir John Lysaght  
Pennefather, 1857.
- The Hon. Major General Charles Warren,  
1860.
- Brigadier General Mark K. Atherley, 1863.
- Major General W.J. Ridley, 1864-65-67.
- The Hon. Major General Sir Alfred Hosford,  
1871.
- The Hon. Major General Charles Elmhirst,  
1874.
- The Hon. Major General James Talbot Airey,  
1876-77-78.
- The Hon. Major General Percy R. B.  
Fielding, 1880.
- Major General Charles Fredrick . Torrens  
Daniell, 1884.
- Major General John Davis, 1886-87.
- The Hon. Major General Hales Wilkie, 1891.
- Major General Oliver Henry Atkins Nicolls,  
1892.
- Major General Charles Benjamin Knowles,  
1893-94-95.
- Major General the Hon. H. Parnell, 1896.
- Major General J. F. Owen, 1896-1899.
- Major General the Lord Congieton, 1897-98-  
99, 1900-01.
- Major General Sir W. F. Kelly, 1903-04-05.

Major General Harry Barron, 1906-07.

Sir Ed. M. Merewether, 1909-10.

General John Stewart Scott Barker, 1915.

Major General W.C, Hunter Blair, 1919.

His Honour W.C.F. Robertson (Lt. Gov.),  
1920-21-22.

Sir Thomas Van Best (Lt. Governor) 1926.

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## APPENDIX XXI.

LIST OF CHIEF SECRETARIES TO THE  
GOVERNMENT OF MALTA FROM 1800, WITH  
THE DATE OF THEIR APPOINTMENT.

Mr. Felice Cutajar, Auditor and Secretary to  
Sir Alexander Ball, 1800, and assistant  
Secretary (prosegretario) to General Pigot,  
1801.

Mr. Arthur Baynes, Secretary to Major  
General Pigot, 1801.

Mr. Alexander Macaulay, Public Secretary to  
the Royal Commissioner, 1801.

Dr. G. N. Zammit, Prosegretario, signing  
documents with Macaulay and Coleridge.

Mr. S.T. Coleridge, Public Secretary, 1805.

Mr. E.F. Chapman, Public Secretary, 1805.

Rev. Francis Laing, Acting Secretary, 1806.  
1807, and Public Secretary, 1811-1815.

Mr. Alexander Wood, Public Secretary, 1815  
to 1817.

Sir Richard Plasket, Chief Secretary, 1817  
to 1824.

Colonel Sir Frederick Hankey. Chief Secre-  
tary, 1824 1837.

Sir Hector Greig, Acting Chief Secretary  
1821-1822. Chief Secretary, 1837-1846.

Mr. W. Sim, Acting Chief Secretary from  
1826-1850.

Mr. Henry Lushington, 1857

Mr. W.H. Thorton, Acting Secretary, 1852  
to 1853.

Mr. Richard Cornwall Legh, Acting Secretary  
1855 to 1875.

Sir Victor Houlton, Chief Secretary, 1855.

Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Le Marchant,  
Acting Chief Secretary, 1858.

Captain Wilford Brett, Acting Chief Secretary,  
1858 to 1859.

Mr. Cecil G.A. Drummond, Acting Chief  
Secretary, 1864.

Lieutenant G. C. Straham, Acting Chief  
Secretary 1867.

Mr. F.P. Hoare, Acting Chief Secretary 1867-  
1879.

Sir Walter Hely Hutchinson, Lieutenant  
Governor and Chief Secretary, 1883.

Mr. Emilio De Petri, Acting Chief Secretary  
1886-89-90.

Sir Gerald Strickland, Acting Chief Secretary  
1889, Chief Secretary, 1889.

Mr. Francesco Vella, Acting Chief Secretary,  
1896-7-8-9, 1900-01.

Mr. F.C. Fuller, Acting Chief Secretary,  
1902-03.

Sir Ed. Marsh Merewether, Lieutenant-  
Governor and Chief Secretary to  
Government, 1902.

Mr. Ernest P.S. Roupell, Acting Lieutenant-  
Governor and Chief Secretary, 1909-10-11.

Major John E. Clauson, Lieutenant-Governor  
and Chief Secretary, 1911-12-13.

Mr. Edgar Bonavia, Acting Lieutenant-  
Governor and Chief Secretary, 1913-14-16.

Mr. Horace A. Byatt, Lieutenant-Governor  
and Chief Secretary, 1914.

Mr. W.C.F. Robertson, Lieutenant-Governor  
and Chief Secretary, 1917.

Sir Thomas Van Best, Lieutenant-Governor,  
1925.

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## APPENDIX XXII.

LIST OF JUDGES OF H.M.'s SUPERIOR  
COURTS IN MALTA WITH THE DATE OF THEIR  
APPOINTMENT TO OFFICE.

Vincenzo Bonavita	1814
Sir Giuseppe Borg Olivier	1814
Lorenzo Caruana	1814
Salvatore Chapelle	1814
Giuseppe Calcedonio Debono	1814
Salvatore Scifo	1814
Sir Giuseppe Niccolò Zammit	1814
Sir Agostino Randon	1817
Walter Rodwell Wright	1819
Claudio Vincenzo Bonnici	1825
Sir John Stoddart	1826
Sir Ignazio Gavino Bonavita	1827
Giovanni Vella	1828
Giovanni Battista Satariano	1829
Sir Paolo Dingli	1833
Francesco Chapelle	1839
Giuseppe Francesco Falzon	1839
Pasquale Grungo	1839
Francesco Naudi	1840
Giacomo Pantaleone Bruno	1841
Antonio Maria Debono	1852
Sir Antonio Micallef	1853
Giovanni Conti	1856
Sir Salvatore Naudi	1860
Ignazio Schembri	1860

Francesco Fiteni	1862
Lorenzo Xuereb	1867
Paolo Vella	1869
Filippo Pullicino	1873
Giuseppe Gasan	1877
Sir Adrian Dingli	1880
Luigi Ganado	1886
Pasquale Mifsud	1889
Alessandro Chapelle	1892
Paolo Debono	1892
Sir Joseph Carbone	1894
Agostino Naudi	1895
Giovanni Pullicino	1895
Zaccaria Roncali	1895
Antonio Micallef	1902
Alfredo Parnis	1906
Gio Batta Mifsud	1909
Stefano Micallef	1910
Giuseppe Agius	1915
Sir Vincent Frendo Azzopardi	1915
Sir M.A. Refalo	1919
Luigi Camilleri	1919
Giuseppe Cremona	1919
Sir Arturo Mercieca	1921
Francis Buhagiar	1925
Robert Ganado	1925
Philip Pullicino	1928
Alfred Sultana	1928
Eric Parnis	1929
Giacomo De Pasquale	1929



## APPENDIX XXIII.

## CURRENCY IN MALTA UNDER THE VARIOUS DOMINATIONS.

PHOENICIANS— The Phoenicians had a silver standard of commercial currency. The known coins were the *Shekel* and the *Demi-Shekel*.

CARTHAGINIANS—Carthage used coins of brass, silver, gold, and of an amalgam of gold and silver called *electrum*.

ROMANS— Originally, the Romans used ingots of copper weighing 1, 4, and 5 pounds, called: *As*, *quadrussis*, and *quinqussis*. The fractions of the *As*,  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{1}{3}$ ,  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{6}$ , and  $\frac{1}{12}$ , were called *semis*, *triens*, *quadrans*, *sextans* and *uncia*, respectively. In 269 B.C. a silver standard was introduced. The silver *denarius* was worth 10 *Asses*.

The *quinarius* was  $\frac{1}{2}$  and the *sestertius*,  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the denarius. The *Sestertium* was a money unit equal to 1000 sestertii. The *Aureus* was a golden coin that appeared in the 1st century B.C. and was worth 100 sestertii or 25 denarii. Constantine substituted the *Solidus* for the *Aureus*. The brass coins were of three sizes *small*, *medium* and *large*.

ARABS—

The Arabs (Saracens) had a golden *Karat*, a *Dinar* and a *Mitqal* comparable to the European *zecchino*.

THE NORMANS—The Normans used the golden (1102-1194) *Triple Tari*, the *Double Tari*, and the *Tari*, called also at times *Ducato*, *Soldo*, and *Follare*, and a small brass currency.

THE SUABIANS—During the rule of the Suabians in Malta, the *Tari*, of the Normans remained in use.

THE ANGEVINS—The Golden *Saluto* and  $\frac{1}{2}$  (1266-1282) *Saluto*, called also *Denaro Regale*, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  *Denaro Regale*,

were used under the Angevins. The best known silver coin was the *Saluto* or *Carlino gigliato*.

THE ARAGONESE—Under the Aragonese the (1283-1479) currency varied with the reigning families. Of gold, they had during their reign the *Ducatone*, the *Ducato*, the *Aquila*, the *Tarì*, and the *Raonese*: of silver, they had the *Carlino*, the *Alfonsino*, the *Reale*, the *Grosso*, and the *Pierreale* or *Tarì*: of brass, they had the *Cinquina*, the *Tornese*, and the *Cavallo*.

THE CASTILIANS—During the Castilian period (1479-1530) the currency was as follows: Gold—the *Ducato*, the *Scudo Riccio*, the *Doppio Scudo* or *Dobla*, the *Testone*.

Silver—The *Carlino* and the *Cinquina*.

Brass — *Due Grana*, *Un Grano*, *Tre Cavalli*, *Due Cavalli*, *Un Cavallo*.

THE ORDER OF ST. JOHN  
(1530-1798)

During the two centuries of their rule the Knights had coins of a great variety of values.

GOLD:	12	zecchini	piece	value	80/-
	10	"	"	"	66/8
	4	"	"	"	26/8
	1	zecchino	"	"	6/8
	20	Scudi	"	"	33/4
	10	"	"	"	16/8
	5	"	"	"	8/4
SILVER:	30	tarì	piece	"	4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
	15	"	"	"	2/1
	2	Scudi	"	"	3/4
	1	Scudo	"	"	1/8
	8	Tari	"	"	about 1/2
	6	"	"	"	" -/10
	4	"	"	"	" -/7
	3	"	"	"	" -/5
	1	"	"	"	" -/2
	1	Carlino		"	" -/1
	$\frac{1}{2}$	"		"	" -/ $\frac{1}{2}$

COPPER:	4 tarì piece	„ „	-/7
	2 „ „	„ „	-/3
	1 „ „	„ „	-/2
	1 Carlino	„ „	-/1
	1 Cinquina	„ „	-/½
	1 half „	„ „	-/¼
	1 grano	„ „	-/12
	3 dinieri	„ „	-/24
	1 picciolo or diniere	„ „	-/72

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## APPENDIX XXIV.

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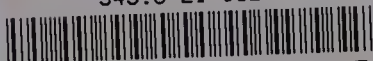
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